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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 19, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PHIL GINGREY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for 5 minutes.

IRAQIS MUST ASSUME MORE RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I am very concerned about Iraq. Very concerned. The weather vane of the Iraqi fight has shifted clearly to the Iraqis. It is theirs to win or lose. General John Abizaid stated yesterday, ''It's very, very clear that in order to win in Iraq, the Iraqis have to assume more and more responsibility.''

Last week, there were two developments in Iraq that I feel need to be highlighted. First, the Marine Corps' chief of intelligence in Iraq has reportedly described the situation in the Sunni-dominated Anbar province as ''politically'' lost to al Qaeda. The second is the plan to secure Baghdad from the insurgents by encircling it with, for lack of a better word, a moat. The idea of a moat went out of style in the middle ages. Both of these reports paint a less than rosy picture of how we are faring in this war that has already cost so much in blood and treasure. These two developments indicate that our level of effort is insufficient to maintain control of the country.

On the basis of these and other reports, some analysts determined that the solution to our problems in Baghdad and the Anbar province is to send more troops to Iraq. This might sound like a plausible course of action except for the fundamental problem that there are no more units to send to Iraq. Oh, certainly we can surge units forward into combat, but there is no way we can sustain that increase for any significant period of time. The administration's poor planning and poor strategic choices in Iraq have depleted our military of equipment and manpower. Iraq has become a black hole, sapping our strategic base of resources. The readiness situation has become so bad that our nondeployed combat brigades report that if called today, they may not be fully ready to complete all of their wartime missions.

The fact that our ground force readiness has fallen to such a dangerous level risks emboldening our enemies both in Iraq and elsewhere in the world. We must act now to reverse this decline. Certainly spending more money on Army and Marine Corps readiness will help. The Congress has provided additional funds to reset Army and Marine Corps equipment. But even with that increased funding, it will take some time for our units to get healthy again. I also strongly urge the administration to submit a budget that realistically reflects the services' needs.

But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, additional money will not be enough. We do not have the luxury of staying the course. The conflict in Iraq has depleted our ground forces and placed this country at strategic risk. We must start making significant progress in Iraq now, and the best way to do it is by transitioning the responsibility for Iraqi security to the Iraqis. I urge the administration to redouble its efforts to train and equip the Iraqi security forces.

COMBATING CORRUPTION REQUIRES EXPANDING FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, according to the State Department, international corruption costs American companies that play by the rules many billions of dollars in lost exports. Corruption impedes government efforts to deliver basic efforts to citizens, weakens confidence in democracy, and is often linked to international criminal activity. It causes rampant economic inefficiency, interferes with capital markets, and obviously contributes to poverty.

Transparency International is a global not-for-profit organization dedicated to the fight against corruption. Transparency puts out annual reports on the state of corruption worldwide, trying to measure whether we are winning or losing that fight.

This fight is a top priority for the U.S. Departments of State, Justice and Commerce. My colleagues, since 1979, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, has had a convention against corruption

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and continues to see it as a top global priority. All this reflects a growing international consensus that corruption is a problem that we must confront. That much is true. But working on anticorruption campaigns, all these entities treat the symptoms rather than the disease. The disease is oppression and lawlessness. The cure is freedom and the rule of law.

The annual Index of Economic Freedom, compiled by the Heritage Foundation and the Wall Street Journal, provides a simple framework for understanding how open countries are to competition; the degree of state intervention in the economy, whether through taxation, spending or overregulation; and the strength and independence of a country's judiciary to enforce rules and protect private property.

One of the indicators in the index is the size of a nation's ''informal,'' or black market economy, which helps to measure this corruption. Charting the relationship between economic freedom and the size of the informal economy as a percentage of GDP, the Heritage Foundation found a positive correlation between these two factors. They reported, ''as economic freedom vanishes, the informal economy takes a larger share of GDP. The size of the informal economy in economically unfree and repressed economies is almost three times the size of the informal economy in free economies, and almost double the size of the informal economy in mostly free economies.'' The Heritage calculations demonstrate the perverse effect of economic repression on the moral behavior of simple, ordinary people and the continuation of the cycle of poverty that entraps them.

Access to credit in most developed countries is the key to a better standard of living. That access is incumbent upon proving income or property, for which you need a formal job and a legal title to that property.

When it is difficult for people to invest in business, whether a corner grocery store or a major factory, formal jobs are hard to come by. Jobs can be more easily had in the informal economy, where small and medium entrepreneurs can negotiate salaries and benefits, and tie them to performance. In cases like this, the government bureaucracy encumbers legal businesses, encouraging employers and employees to operate in the shadows.

Without a formal job, you can still get credit if you have titled property to offer as collateral. But while Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto has shown that most of the poorest people in the developing world own property, they face innumerable bureaucratic hurdles in order to actually title that property as their own. In Peru, he says, ''to obtain legal authorization to build a house on state-owned land took 6 years and 11 months. To obtain a legal title for that piece of land took 728 steps.'' Other countries are similarly ridiculous. In Egypt, it takes 77 steps in 31 government offices and anywhere from 6 to 14 years. In the Philippines, it takes 168 steps through 53 offices and anywhere from 13 to 25 years to get legal title to this property.

An oppressive government system perpetuates the poverty of its citizens by making it impossible to claim their property rights and pursue legal employment. Equally important, the Heritage Foundation says that the resulting black market economy ''creates a culture of contempt for the law and fosters corruption and bribery in the public sector as a necessary means to navigate the bureaucracy.''

Mr. Speaker, when those folks, particularly international elites, take on corruption, they see it as just one more corporate scandal to be uncovered and think that will be that and we can fix it. One more capitalistic crime, they call it, that must be prosecuted. That is not it. That is not it at all. In reality, corruption indicates a simple lack of freedom and, more importantly, a consistent rule of law.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Most Reverend Anthony Sablan Apuron, Archbishop of Agana, Guam, offered the following prayer:

Almighty and eternal God, whose goodness fills our hearts with joy and whose love permeates our daily lives, You are blessed for bringing us together to work in harmony, in peace, and in justice. Send Your blessings upon our United States House of Representatives, who generously devote themselves to the work of our Nation and territories in the laws they pass and the resolutions they create.

In times of difficulty, challenge and need, grant them the strength to transcend personal interests and seek only after the common good for all. Strengthen them, Lord, with Your grace and wisdom so that everything that they do may begin with Your inspiration, may continue with Your guidance and, by You, be happily ended.

Grace us with Your saving presence and aid us with Your constant blessing.

All glory and praise be to You, our ever-living God, forever and ever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BORDALLO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 5684. An act to implement the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 19, 2006.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 19, 2006, at 10:25 a.m.:

That the Senate returned the papers to the House pursuant to H. Res. 1011 H.R. 503.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

WELCOMING THE MOST REVEREND ANTHONY SABLAN APURON, O.F.M. CAP., D.D. METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP OF AGANA

(Ms. BORDALLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today, it is my privilege and honor to welcome His Excellency, the Most Reverend Anthony Sablan Apuron, the Archbishop of Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agana, Guam, to this House.

Archbishop Apuron is a man of great faith, wisdom and inspiration. He has shepherded the faithful on Guam, the Northern Marianas, Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands for the past 20 years as our archbishop.

The Catholic Church in the Pacific has blossomed under his leadership,

and our communities have greatly benefited from his ministry. This past weekend, Archbishop Apuron led a pilgrimage from Guam to Washington, DC, for the enshrinement of Our Lady of Camarin, the Patroness of the Marianas, in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Many of these pilgrims, Madam Speaker, from Guam are with us today in the gallery.

I thank Archbishop Apuron for his prayer this afternoon and for his guidance and counsel throughout the years. The people of Guam join me in thanking you, Madam Speaker, and our House chaplain, Father Daniel Coughlin, for the invitation to Archbishop Apuron to serve as guest chaplain.

I thank you. Si Yuos Maase. God bless America and God bless Guam.

POLITICIZING THE WAR ON TERROR

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to challenge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. They continue to pound the drums and politicize the war on terror and unnecessarily criticize the administration. Yet they have no plan or any indication of one for how they would make our Nation more secure.

As the President said last week in his press conference, he wakes up every day to a thorough intelligence briefing that informs of the actions of numerous Islamo-fascists and others whose only goal is to destroy America, our freedoms and our way of life. He must respond to those threats.

The President is not politicizing the war on terror. He is simply carrying out his duty to protect and defend this Nation and constructing plans to ensure that our Nation is safer from potential terrorist attacks, and thus far it has been. As we all know, there has been no attack on American soil since 9/11, but many attempts have been thwarted.

This is not, and should not be, a political issue, and it is time for the Democrats to stop trying to make it one. This is about national security, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle need to realize what is at stake here.

IN MEMORY OF ESTHER MARTINEZ

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the memory of a very special New Mexican, Esther Martinez.

Esther Martinez is renowned for her work as an educator, author and master story teller.

Last Thursday, Esther was in Washington, DC, where I had the privilege of helping present her with the Nation's highest honor for folk and traditional artists. At the age of 94, Esther was named as a 2006 National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts. With members of her family in the audience, Esther rose to be honored and received a standing ovation for her life's work preserving her native Tewa language and traditions.

Tragically, while making her way back home from the airport Saturday evening, Esther was killed in a traffic accident.

Our hearts weigh heavy with the news of Esther's tragic passing, but her legacy will forever live in the contributions she made to our Nation as an educator, linguist and master story teller.

Our deepest sympathies are with her family today.

THE POPE AND FREE SPEECH AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, over the last few days, radical Muslims burned the Pope in effigy, destroyed churches in Israel, preached hatred against the Pope and Christians, and cowardly killed a 65-year-old nun, shooting her four times in the back. So much for nonviolence by these radical Muslims.

All this because the Pope quoted a Byzantine emperor from the 1400s who commented on Muhammad's purported command ''to spread by the sword the faith he preached.'' The Pope, of course, was not agreeing with this Byzantine emperor. The Pope was promoting discourse among all religions.

But when the feelings of these radicals get hurt, we overreact, blame ourselves and apologize. That is what the Pope did.

I question whether the Pope should have even apologized. So much for free speech, so much for religious freedom, and so much for nonviolence.

In our world, hypocritical, radical Muslims may preach hate and violence against Christians and Jews, but heaven forbid anybody mention or quote slightly negative comments about radical Muslims, because this extremist sect will react with violence to prove just how nonviolent they are.

And that's just the way it is.

A CRITICAL TIME FOR THE PEOPLE OF DARFUR

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, this week marks a critical time for the people of Darfur and for this administration's role in ending the 3-year genocide in Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians have been murdered by the government-backed Janjaweed, and the African Union's peacekeeping mission mandate is set to expire within a couple of weeks.

It has been 2 years since the President declared that genocide was taking place in Darfur, but we are still allowing the Government of Sudan to act with impunity and commit crimes against humanity.

Today President Bush addressed the crisis in Darfur before the United Nations and appointed Andrew Natsios as the U.S.' Special Envoy to Sudan. This is a step in the right direction, but it is not enough. The United States must push to keep an international peacekeeping force in Darfur, and this force must be stronger and more robust, with the authority to use force to protect the innocent civilians who are trapped in this nightmare. This has to happen as quickly as possible.

Would we be this complacent if the genocide was not in Africa? Would the administration act any differently if claims of ethnic cleansing were in Europe or the Middle East? What in the world does it take for us to stand tall against the evil of genocide wherever it is taking place?

We have to act before September 30. We have to require that President el-Bashir stop the indiscriminate killing and slaughter of the helpless and the weak in his country.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTION DAY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Sunday marked the 219th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. To ensure our schoolchildren are educated about our Nation's founding, Congress requires each school to hold an education program observing Constitution Day.

Yesterday, schoolchildren across the country watched as General Colin Powell led the Nationwide recitation of the Preamble. Students at Brookland-Cayce High School in Lexington County's School District 2 hung banners around the school displaying the Bill of Rights. Each senior received a pocket-sized Constitution.

Principal Scott Newman should be commended for his commitment to ensuring students at BC High are well-versed in our Nation's history. He was raised well by his parents, dedicated educators, Tom and Frankie Newman.

As Cicero said, ''To remain ignorant of things that happened before you were born is to remain a child.'' If the goal of Constitution Day is realized, our Nation's schoolchildren will grow into engaged adult citizens.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

GOLDEN DRAIN AWARDS TO CHERTOFF AND RUMSFELD

(Mr. CARDOZA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, the Truth Squad on Waste, Fraud and Abuse has been tasked with holding this administration and this Congress accountable for mishandling of taxpayer dollars.

Last week the Truth Squad recognized the first two winners of the Golden Drain Award, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

We created this award to bring attention to the waste, fraud and abuse in government. Otherwise it will never stop.

Overseeing a department that has squandered billions of taxpayer dollars, Michael Chertoff and Donald Rumsfeld are clearly deserving of this inauspicious honor.

In FEMA alone, we have seen billions of dollars go down the golden drain as a result of no-bid contracts and fraud during the aftermath of the Katrina crisis.

The Defense Department has been unable to produce a clean audit, and the Pentagon's track record of waste, fraud and mismanagement in Iraq under Mr. Rumsfeld is disgraceful.

All told, the Truth Squad has identified over $150 billion that has gone down the golden drain.

Republicans believe that government does not work, and this administration seems to prove it every single day. Enough is enough. It is time for a new direction.

PRETEXTING AND HP

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, it was recently reported that in order to stop boardroom media leaks, investigators hired by Hewlett-Packard used pretexting to obtain the phone records of directors and journalists. This disclosure demonstrates another nasty byproduct of having the availability of Internet-based personal information instantly available.

One of the major reasons for the growing pretexting problem is the lax data security at businesses that hold sensitive consumer information. The Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee which I chair has amassed an extensive record on these issues.

I have introduced H.R. 4127, the Data Accountability and Trust Act, which is designed to improve data security and attack the scourge of privacy-infringing practices, like pretexting, that continue to be exploited on the Internet. The DATA Act will go a long way toward protecting the privacy rights of all Americans, and I urge its consideration by the full House.

MILITARY TRIBUNALS

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on the House and Senate to quickly pass the right kind of military tribunal legislation.

We are in a war for the future of civilization, and military tribunals provide the best way for us to bring brutal terrorists to justice and to prevent future attacks on our citizens.

Military commissions have been successfully used throughout United States history to bring dangerous war criminals to justice. President Roosevelt used them in 1942 to try eight German saboteurs who plotted to attack the United States. In fact, military commissions have been used by President Lincoln and even General George Washington. Now Congress must allow this same power to our modern-day Presidents.

The right kind of military tribunal legislation can help us to disrupt actual terrorist plots right here in America; access critical information on al Qaeda; and prevent handing over Top Secret information to men like Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, one of the masterminds of September 11.

September 11 was one of the darkest days in United States history. We must give our military the power to continue preventing other devastating attacks.

□ 1415

RULE OF LAW AND PRISONERS

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. We are having a very important debate in this country on how we deal with terrorist prisoners or so-called terrorist prisoners and the way that we try them and the way that we present evidence.

Many of you will remember that in the Oklahoma City bombing when Timothy McVeigh was captured no one in the United States of America said, We are not going to give him all the rights under our Constitution, we are not going to show him the evidence that we have against him; we are going to deny him all his full rights to a jury trial.

If you think about it, no matter how heinous the crime is, when it occurs here, Americans say we have the rule of law, that is who we are. And no matter how horrible and horrifying it is, each individual has a process.

It seems to me that when we deal with this war on terrorism that we are talking about so much, that we owe it to ourselves as a country that established the rule of law that we make sure that those who are accused get the charges against them and the right to defend themselves.

MILITARY COUP IN THAILAND

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, news reports indicate that there may be an ongoing military coup under way in Thailand against the democratically elected government.

As a new member of the National Endowment for Democracy's board, I think we should take all threats to new democracies very seriously and lay out a clear policy for the United States to follow. We should support the democratic Prime Minister of Thailand. And if military forces succeed, it should be the policy of our State Department to terminate all U.S. assistance to Thailand.

It should be the policy of our Treasury Department to undermine the Bot, the Thai currency; it should be the policy of the Department of Defense to cease all military contact with the Thai military; and it should be the policy of our government in general to undermine military rulers in Thailand and return a democratically elected Prime Minister to office.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

WOOL SUIT FABRIC LABELING FAIRNESS AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS CONFORMING ACT

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4583) to amend the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to revise the requirements for labeling of certain wool and cashmere products, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4583

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act''.

SEC. 2. LABELING OF WOOL AND CASHMERE PRODUCTS TO FACILITATE COMPLIANCE AND PROTECT CONSUMERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(a) of the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 (15 U.S.C. 68b(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(5) In the case of a wool product stamped, tagged, labeled, or otherwise identified as—

''(A) 'Super 80's' or '80's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 19.75 microns or finer;

''(B) 'Super 90's' or '90's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 19.25 microns or finer;

''(C) 'Super 100's' or '100's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 18.75 microns or finer;

''(D) 'Super 110's' or '110's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 18.25 microns or finer;

''(E) 'Super 120's' or '120's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 17.75 microns or finer;

''(F) 'Super 130's' or '130's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 17.25 microns or finer;

''(G) 'Super 140's' or '140's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 16.75 microns or finer;

''(H) 'Super 150's' or '150's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 16.25 microns or finer;

''(I) 'Super 160's' or '160's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 15.75 microns or finer;

''(J) 'Super 170's' or '170's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 15.25 microns or finer;

''(K) 'Super 180's' or '180's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 14.75 microns or finer;

''(L) 'Super 190's' or '190's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 14.25 microns or finer;

''(M) 'Super 200's' or '200's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 13.75 microns or finer;

''(N) 'Super 210's' or '210's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 13.25 microns or finer;

''(O) 'Super 220's' or '220's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 12.75 microns or finer;

''(P) 'Super 230's' or '230's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 12.25 microns or finer;

''(Q) 'Super 240's' or '240's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 11.75 microns or finer; and

''(R) 'Super 250's' or '250's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 11.25 microns or finer.

In each such case, the average fiber diameter of such wool product may be subject to such standards or deviations as adopted by regulation by the Commission.

''(6) In the case of a wool product stamped, tagged, labeled, or otherwise identified as cashmere, if—

''(A) such wool product is not the fine (dehaired) undercoat fibers produced by a cashmere goat (capra hircus laniger);

''(B) the average diameter of the fiber of such wool product exceeds 19 microns; or

''(C) such wool product contains more than 3 percent (by weight) of cashmere fibers with average diameters that exceed 30 microns.

The average fiber diameter may be subject to a coefficient of variation around the mean that shall not exceed 24 percent.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to wool products manufactured on or after January 1, 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation and to insert extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4583, the Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act, introduced by my colleague, Mrs. BLACKBURN of Tennessee, and co-sponsored by my colleague, the ranking member of our subcommittee, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY of Illinois.

This is a simple bill, my colleagues, which is fundamental and has a fundamental purpose: to give consumers the information they need to make buying decisions about the products they want.

This bill would amend the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to make specific and standard certain designations of fabric quality for certain wool products.

For years, high-end suits and other expensive wool garments have carried the label ''super'' and a number like 120 or 130, to designate the fineness of the weave of the wool and thus the quality and cost of producing the fabric. It is about time we make certain that there is a standard, internationally accepted definition of the ''super'' designation to ensure that unscrupulous garment manufacturers don't dupe consumers with simple phony labels. We owe that to the American consumer and to the great American textile industry that produces these fine products.

H.R. 4583 makes the ''super'' designation a standard designation of quality wool products. Likewise, the Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act creates a specific and standard definition of cashmere so that the term cashmere actually means a certain thing rather than serving as an nonspecific reference to a quality. The end result is a bill that establishes a legal standard for labeling ''super'' and cashmere wool products based on internationally accepted standards.

As I said, while these may seem a bit technical, standardizing the designation of a certain level of quality, no matter what the products, allows consumers and the manufacturers alike to be certain that what they are spending their hard-earned dollars on is real and is genuine. That is a laudable goal for any piece of legislation.

I therefore would like to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it on final passage.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4583, the Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act; and I want to thank Representative BLACKBURN, the lead sponsor of H.R. 4583. It was a pleasure to work with her and her staff on a bill that would help consumers, American workers, and manufacturers in the wool products industry.

Our bill would update the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to include the internationally recognized standards for wool fiber content of the various ''super'' grade fabric, and ensure that any clothing labeled as cashmere actually includes hair from the cashmere goat.

Although quite simple and straightforward, our bill is very important to the U.S. wool products industry. With the increase in imports from China, the domestic apparel manufacturers and textile mills face significant challenges to maintaining employment and production. By requiring clothing to be labeled properly, our bill will help level the playing field. It will ensure that consumers are better informed about the products they are buying, and it will put an end to mislabeled wool and cashmere products in the United States. No longer will imported suits of a lower quality be able to claim they are the same high quality as those bearing the ''made in the U.S.A.'' label. This bill updates the outdated law that does not recognize the different levels of yarn fineness.

We have a great tradition of wool suit craftsmanship in the United States. By updating the Wool Products Labeling Act, H.R. 4583 will help ensure the health and vitality of the U.S. apparel and textile industry which includes members of my union, UNITE HERE!, and two Chicago-based manufacturers, Hartmarx and Oxxford Clothes.

The passage of our bill will ensure that the U.S. tailored clothing industry can continue to thrive in the international marketplace. H.R. 4583 is supported both by the wool suit manufacturers and the Garment Workers Union, UNITE HERE!, as well as the U.S. textile industry. I urge my colleagues to support it as well, and I look forward to the passage of this bill today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the author of the bill, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I do rise today in support of this legislation to update our wool labeling laws. I want to thank Chairman BARTON, Ranking Member DINGELL, as well as Chairman STEARNS, for their help in bringing the legislation forward. I also want to thank and commend my friend from Illinois, the ranking member of the Commerce Trade and Consumer Protections Subcommittee, Representative SCHAKOWSKY, for joining me to sponsor the legislation.

The Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act will modernize the Wool Labeling Act by using the international definition of ''super'' as an identifier for the quality of wool products. We have written this legislation to protect consumers and industry participants from the mislabeling of certain suiting fabrics.

In recent years, many wool products at the wholesale and retail level, including worsted wool fabrics and apparel items, are being marketed and labeled as ''super 100,'' and ''super 120s,'' and so-called ''super'' grades. These refer to the fineness of the yarn contained in the product. The finer the average yard is in diameter, the higher the super's grade.

Higher super grades reflect products that are supposed to have higher yarns and therefore sold at higher prices. The Wool Labeling Act, which regulates the labeling of wool products in the United States, has not been amended to reflect the current marketing practice of using supers as an identifier for quality wool products.

The International Wool Textile Organization is the international body representing the interests of the world's wool textile industry, which includes the U.S., oversees the implementation of the International Wool Textile Arbitration Agreement. The IWTO has adopted a code of practice regarding the use of the term ''super'' on wool products, and the exact yarn diameter that each level of ''super'' must contain. Woolmark, a company that licenses the use of the Woolmark logo, has accepted the identical definition.

Modernization of the Wool Labeling Act has strong support, as my colleague mentioned. It is supported by the National Textile Association, Victor Forstman, UNITE, the Cashmere and Camel Hair Manufacturers Institute, the American Apparel and Footwear Association, Hartmarx, and Hickey Freeman on behalf of the Tailored Clothing Association.

As the domestic tailored clothing industry and wool textile mills continue to face significant challenges, this legislation is timely and it is vital to the continued health of this important manufacturing sector in the U.S. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, let me close by saying this: this is really a jobs bill and a truth-in-labeling bill. It is a win-win-win situation: good for the consumers, good for the manufacturers, good for the garment workers. And I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4583, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1430

SUPPORTING THE GOAL OF ELIMINATING SUFFERING AND DEATH DUE TO CANCER BY THE YEAR 2015

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 210) supporting the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 210

Whereas this year alone, cancer will claim the lives of more than 570,000 Americans—1,500 per day—and is the cause of one of every four deaths in the United States;

Whereas more than 1,300,000 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2005;

Whereas it is estimated that cancer cost the Nation nearly $190,000,000,000 in 2003, including more than $69,000,000,000 in direct medical costs;

Whereas the Nation's investment in cancer research and programs has led to real progress—between 1991 and 2001, cancer death rates declined by more than 9 percent and about 258,000 lives were saved;

Whereas cancer touches almost every family, with over 10,000,000 Americans now living with a history of cancer;

Whereas at least half of all cancer deaths could be prevented by applying existing knowledge;

Whereas the Director of the National Cancer Institute has set a bold goal to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer by 2015; and

Whereas eliminating suffering and death due to cancer will require a commitment by the Congress and the private sector to continue to make the fight against cancer a priority: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress supports the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by 2015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 210.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 210, a resolution supporting the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015.

To many people, the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer in under a decade may seem impossible or at least highly unlikely. But when we take a step back and look at the amazing things we have accomplished in the last three decades, I believe that with the hard work and concentrated effort of our Nation, this goal is realistic and achievable.

Thirty years ago, just hearing the word ''cancer'' sent chills down people's spines. Cancer of any kind was seen as a virtual death sentence. And unfortunately, today cancer is still a death sentence for far too many people from all ages and all walks of life.

But for an increasing number of Americans, cancer is no longer a death sentence as it once was. Rather, it is becoming a preventable, controllable, beatable disease. Today medical science is accomplishing things that were undreamed of 30 years ago. For the first time, we are seeing a decline in the numbers of lives claimed by cancer each year. People are living longer both with the disease and after the disease. Screening is better and more widespread than ever. Treatments are better and safer, and outcomes continue to improve. Based on the strides that we have made, I can honestly say I think we are winning the war on cancer.

I can also say with confidence that the future of cancer research looks bright. With the mapping of the human genome, we will be able to identify each person's cancer-related genes. Using this information, we can design tailored prevention and treatment options for each individual patient. The availability of these advanced techniques is not a question of if, but when.

While the goal of ending suffering and death from cancer by the year 2015 requires us to set our eyes on the future, we must also focus on what can be done today. The resolution before us encourages Congress to examine how the resources of this great Nation can best be harnessed to reach the ultimate goal to finding a cure. Whether through government-sponsored research, partnerships with the private sector, investors, or philanthropic organizations, we must pursue this enemy of cancer on all fronts.

We must set priorities. We must demand more for our money. We must foster the next generation of cancer scientists and researchers and encourage more young people to enter this high calling. We must ensure that the fruits of research make their way into clinical practice and into public health efforts to reduce the burden of cancer. We must promote policies that encourage proper intellectual property management, the key to scientific innovation. We must make sure that people who qualify have access to clinical trials.

But finally and most importantly, we must not forget the human face of cancer. Outside of this Chamber, thousands of people are gathering on the National Mall as part the American Cancer Society's Celebration on the Hill. People whose lives have been touched by cancer from every State and every congressional district across the United States have come to celebrate life, to remember those that were

lost, and to have their voices heard. I applaud their courage, faith and perseverance, and I look forward to meeting with many of them during the coming hours and days.

With their help and shining example, along with the continued attention of this great Nation, we can meet the challenge set forth in the resolution, to end suffering and death from cancer by the year 2015.

In closing, I would like to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for introducing this important resolution. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I support the goal of ending suffering and death by cancer by the year 2015 as set forth in this resolution. It is certainly a commendable goal; and, of course, I support the resolution.

But what is Congress doing to set up programs and strategic plans to make that goal a reality? For example, the National Cancer Institute has focused the fight against cancer on eight strategic objectives, including: First, understanding the causes and mechanisms of cancer; second, accelerating the progress in cancer prevention; third, improving early detection and diagnosis; fourth, developing effective and efficient treatment; fifth, understanding the factors that influence cancer outcomes; sixth, improving the quality of cancer care; seventh, improving the quality of life for cancer patients, survivors and their families; and, eighth, overcoming cancer health disparities.

That is the National Cancer Institute. That is what they are focusing on. Congress, on the other hand, is doing little to help this fight. A resolution I would say is mere talk and does not actually take action to fight cancer.

I think Congress has choices right now, and instead of passing this resolution, we should, for example, increase funding for NIH's cancer research, fund real stem cell research supported by the scientific community, fund the Department of Defense's breast cancer research program, and probably most important, expand health coverage to the 46 million Americans that do not have it today. Three times as many people have lost health insurance as jobs since the Bush administration has come to power. Without health coverage, early detection and treatment are almost impossible.

There are many cancers that can be cured today, such as cervical, breast and prostate cancer, but without health insurance, access to early detection or follow-up treatment it is almost impossible for the many hardworking people across this country.

This year alone, Madam Speaker, cancer will claim the lives of 570,000 Americans, that is 1,500 per day, almost half of those that gave their lives on September 11. In addition, 1.3 million new cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2005 alone.

Again, the goal of this resolution is good. I support it, but we should be on the floor today supporting legislative action, not a resolution to help everyone suffering from or touched by cancer. As much as I support this resolution, I think that a lot more needs to be done that is not being addressed today by this Republican majority.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the resolution, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW).

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge passage of this important bipartisan resolution that I introduced with my fellow cancer survivors and advocates COLLIN PETERSON, DEBORAH PRYCE, LOIS CAPPS, SUE MYRICK and STEVE ISRAEL, all cochairs of the 2015 Cancer Caucus.

This resolution expresses Congress' support for the National Cancer Institute's goal of eliminating the suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015.

Cancer claims the lives of more than 570,000 Americans each year. That is right, over half a million, but we have yet to declare a full-scale war on cancer. The passage of this resolution today puts us on record as going on the right track. Cancer affects everyone. It is not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue, it is an issue for our entire country, and it is an issue that faces the world.

In 1961, President Kennedy established the lofty goal of putting a man on the moon in 10 years. This historic goal was achieved in just 8 years. Just as this goal was established and achieved, so can the goal of 2015.

We are very close to achieving the goal of ending cancer death and suffering. But when you are in a race and you see the finish line, you don't jog, you sprint. Scientists at the National Cancer Institute and other private and public research facilities across the country and world are conducting vital research each and every day that will enable cancer sufferers to be cancer survivors.

We must show our solidarity on these efforts by fully supporting the 2015 goal and providing the Federal resources necessary that to achieve it. Over the last 5 years, we have doubled the research dollars for cancer, but yet that is not enough. I see no better legacy for future generations than ending cancer suffering and cancer death.

Over 10,000 cancer survivors and advocates from across the country are converging on the Capitol this week for the American Cancer Society's Celebration on the Hill. These heroes will be visiting every one of our offices this week. When you visit with them, and I hope you will visit with them and not push them off to staff, I hope you pledge your strongest support on the war against cancer.

We must work together to provide Federal funding needed for research efforts and pass legislation to support early diagnosis and treatment. Ending the suffering and death due to cancer will be achieved with momentous global proportions, the most important public health achievement of all time. I urge passage of this important resolution.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK).

(Mr. STARK asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I would like to address my remarks to the thousands of cancer advocates in Washington this week and thank them for their service and dedication. They have come to Washington to tell Congress to make concrete commitments to fight cancer, but instead of action, they get this useless resolution.

Cancer patients, survivors and advocates are getting nothing but empty words. It is all hat and no cattle. It is typical of Republicans' approach to serious problems in this country. I am surprised that they didn't try and land on an aircraft carrier and declare that cancer was conquered. I am offended that the Republican do-nothing Congress is bringing forth a do-nothing resolution as its response to fighting cancer.

No cancer advocate in our country should be appeased by this vote. The resolution is empty rhetoric and not action. And action is what is needed for cancer, for AIDS, for Parkinson's disease, and so many other diseases that impact our citizens and people around the world.

The sponsor of this resolution is offering a few platitudes that agree with the laudable goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015. I don't know anybody that would not subscribe to that. Maybe move it up to the year 2010, but I can't think of a human being that would object to that.

But how does this resolution achieve that goal? Does it increase the NIH funding for cancer research? No. Do the Republicans oppose that? Yes.

Does it boost support for the Department of Defense breast cancer research program? Not one penny.

Does it extend the expiring tax credit for research and development of lifesaving cancer treatments? No. That, by the way, is something that a few Republicans support, but they can't seem to get it to the floor to get a vote. And they control this place. If they can't get it to the floor, who can?

Does it provide for stem cell research as advocated by the scientific community? No. They are pandering to a bunch of religious radicals and avoiding dealing with scientific research

that is needed to cure these diseases. They put their head in the sand and pander to political contributions.

The sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), voted to cut money for the Centers for Disease Control and early detection and prevention of cancer. This resolution doesn't restore that.

Does it expand health coverage to the nearly 47 million Americans who lack health insurance, can't even find out if they have cancer and, therefore, fail to get the preventive care available to them? No, it does not add insurance to one of the 47 million people without health insurance in this country, who, therefore, do not get medical care. It is the Republican way of all talk and no action.

This resolution is an affront to those who have traveled here from across our Nation to advocate better cancer care. Not only does this resolution fail to do anything to help eliminate cancer, but this Congress is taking us in the wrong direction. Led by the Republicans, President Bush and this Congress have aggressively cut funding for NIH. This year, adjusted for inflation, they have cut $213 million. Over the last 4 years, they have reduced the agency's purchasing power by more than 12 percent.

The cuts aren't just to research. Since President Bush and the Republican leadership have taken office, nearly 7 million people have lost their health insurance, and we all know that is the only way to get proper care. The President used the only veto of his administration to keep in place restrictions on life-saving stem cell research, and the Republican leadership in this Congress didn't have the courage to override that.

I guess I could go on, but I think I have made my point. I wholeheartedly agree we must do much more to eradicate cancer and other dreaded diseases, but I, like the American public, want action, not words. That is why I suspect the American public will join with us in voting for a change in direction in this Congress. We need a new direction. We need people who will put their money where their mouth is and will vote to take action that is so close within our grasp to help these people and not just sit up and preen and say, My goodness, we think cancer is bad. Let's do something about it.

I urge cancer advocates across the country to recognize this resolution for what it is: a pathetic attempt to play lip service to an issue that requires resources, not rhetoric.

□ 1445

You could replace the inheritance tax. That will give you enough money to fund many of these programs, instead of standing up, sticking your thumb in the pie, and saying, ''What a good boy am I.''

Let's get busy. Let's change the direction of this Congress. Let's change the leadership and get action toward finding a cure for cancer, not empty rhetoric.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just say that, again, while the Democrats support this resolution, we are very concerned over the fact that it is essentially commemorative in nature and it does not do anything in terms of funding or addressing any of the problems that have been outlined by the National Cancer Institute in order to move forward and eliminate cancer by the year 2015. So while we think it is a good resolution and we do support it, we need to point out that the Republican majority is essentially doing nothing to implement a strategy that would actually lead us to the eradication of cancer.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is apparent that there is more than one cancer that we are fighting around here, and that is the cancer of political rhetoric that would take a resolution designed to say that we have a goal of eliminating cancer within the next 10 years and try to change it into one of political talk.

I would invite the gentleman from California to accompany me and Mr. PALLONE tomorrow to the Energy and Commerce Committee, where we will be voting to once again reauthorize and to change and expand the concept of the National Institutes of Health of which the Cancer Institute is one.

I would remind him that the National Institutes of Health funding has been doubled during the Republican control of this Congress, something that has not happened prior to that time.

Everyone knows that this is a resolution on its face that is designed to say let us all get behind this issue and put aside political rhetoric and try to have an achievable goal. It is regrettable, and I would apologize to those who are here because they are concerned about the issue of doing something about it, that even a resolution of encouragement and establishing a goal has to take on political overtones.

Tomorrow, the Energy and Commerce Committee will reauthorize and change some of the provisions that have hampered research within the National Institutes of Health and in that will be the Institute for Cancer Research, and I think that is a laudable goal, one that we will be bringing to the floor in the not-too-distant future.

I urge the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, too many people, either personally or through a loved one, have felt the pain of cancer. It strikes 1 out of every 2 men and 1 out of every 3 women and will tragically claim more than 570,000 American lives this year alone.

Cancer is a complex disease that takes many forms. It can attack a single organ or the whole body. It can be caused by genetic factors, environmental circumstances, or both. Without early detection or treatment, it can lead to debilitating illness and often death.

On behalf of the Federal Government, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has led the fight against cancer since its inception in 1937. NCI conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other program with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and their families.

The National Cancer Institute set for itself the goal of ending cancer suffering and death by 2015. Over the last several years, NCI has taken on this challenge by working with expert staff and identified critical paths needed to make the vision a reality. This includes developing a strategic plan and framework for use of funding, infrastructure, tools, and other resources.

Eliminating cancer suffering and death is a true possibility. Americans have already received the benefits of investment in research and other cancer programs—between 1991 and 2001, cancer deaths declined by more than 9 percent. Moreover, doctors are able to help patients defeat a number of cancers if detected early, including cervix, breast, colon, and prostrate cancer. And today 3 out of 4 children with cancer are cured.

The resolution that we are discussing today expresses Congress's, support of ending suffering and death due to cancer. But we can best push for the continued decline of cancer death and suffering by making it a national priority and making the right budget and policy choices to meet this goal by 2015.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support this resolution, which recognizes the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015.

Investments in cancer research and programs continue to be a crucial part of tackling and eliminating this devastating disease. Thanks to prior investments in cancer research and programs, we are making remarkable progress in the fight against cancer.

When Congress and President Nixon joined forces to fight the battle against cancer in 1971, cancer was largely a death sentence. Thirty five years later, our national research investment has yielded substantial gains.

Today, early detection can defeat some of the more common cancers, such as cancer of the cervix, breast, colon and prostate. These represent more than half of all cancers.

In addition, childhood cancer is curable in 3 out of 4 patients. The development of colon cancer screening tests and treatments has led to a 90 percent 5-year survival rate for colon cancers caught in the earliest stages and 64 percent when the cancer has spread only to adjacent organs or lymph nodes.

Though such progress is encouraging, we still have much work to do. Cancer has now surpassed heart disease as the number one killer of Americans under age 85.

Cancer strikes 1 out of every 2 men and 1 out of every 3 women. This year alone, cancer will claim the lives of more than 570,000 Americans—1500 lives per day—and is the cause of 1 out of every 4 deaths in the United States.

It is imperative that we continue to fund and expand medical research to forge the battle

against this deadly enemy. As Americans, we have a strong history, through science and innovation, of detecting, conquering and defeating many illnesses. We must and we will continue to fight cancer until the battle is won.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 210, a resolution to support the National Cancer Institute, NCI, in its goal of eliminating death and suffering due to cancer by 2015. We can and we must make the 2015 goal a priority, but we cannot do that if we continue to cut and underfund the very researchers working to make it a reality.

Thanks to research, great progress has been made against cancer in the last three decades. In 1976, half of all cancer patients survived more than 5 years after diagnosis. Today, closer to two-thirds or 63 percent of adults and 85 percent of children are alive 5 years after they learn they have cancer. Let's build on that progress.

Since cancer is more common among older Americans and the American population is aging, by the year 2050 the number of new cancer cases in America could more than double, with estimates as high as 2.46 million new cases annually. Cancers cost the United States an estimated $210 billion in 2005. This amount included $74 billion in direct medical costs and nearly $136 billion in lost productivity. And advances in biomedical research benefit not only cancer treatment, but provide information on molecular and genetic processes that will aid in a better understanding in the underlying causes of virtually all diseases.

NCI, part of the National Institutes of Health, is the Federal Government's principal agency for cancer research and training. The NCI has a goal of eliminating all suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015. I believe that eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015 should be America's goal.

Madam Speaker, when the House leadership finally schedules a vote on the Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2007, LHHS, I intend to sponsor an amendment that fully funds NCI. The President's proposed 2007 Budget cuts funding to NCI by over $39.7 million and the LHHS bill as written currently includes the same underfunding. The Higgins Amendment to LHHS will restore $240 million in funding to NCI, bringing its total to $5,033,000,000.

Additionally, I will support projects that advance the mission of the Roswell Park Cancer Institute and other local cancer research, treatment, and advocacy projects. Western New York is home to Roswell Park Cancer Institute, a premier cancer research and treatment facility and one of Western New York's top 20 employers. The research done at Roswell has the potential to blow the research field open—and the care provided there to patients cannot be matched.

Finally, I intend to support expanding programs that detect cancer early and help Americans get treatment. These programs significantly reduce the cost to our nation's healthcare system by treating people early. There are proven programs like the Breast and Cervical Early Detection Program, which help underserved communities get diagnosed and treated early. Because of underfunding these programs cannot reach all the people who need them.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I am pleased that we are here today uniting behind this bill and this goal, but we can and we must do much more than pay lip service to meeting the 2015 deadline. Let's take this opportunity to come together and eradicate cancer by fully funding NCI, by supporting local centers, and by reauthorizing and funding the very programs that reach the men, women, and children who need them most and can least afford them.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 210, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 982) supporting the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 982

Whereas peripheral arterial disease is a vascular disease that occurs when narrowed arteries reduce the blood flow to the limbs;

Whereas peripheral arterial disease is a significant vascular disease that can be as serious as a heart attack or stroke;

Whereas peripheral arterial disease affects approximately 8,000,000 to 12,000,000 Americans;

Whereas patients with peripheral arterial disease are at increased risk of heart attack and stroke and are 6 times more likely to die within 10 years than are patients without peripheral arterial disease;

Whereas the survival rate for individuals with peripheral arterial disease is worse than the outcome for many common cancers;

Whereas peripheral arterial disease is a leading cause of lower limb amputation in the United States;

Whereas many patients with peripheral arterial disease have walking impairment that leads to a diminished quality of life and functional capacity;

Whereas a majority of patients with peripheral arterial disease are asymptomatic and less than half of individuals with peripheral arterial disease are aware of their diagnoses;

Whereas African-American ethnicity is a strong and independent risk factor for peripheral arterial disease, and yet this fact is not well known to those at risk;

Whereas effective treatments are available for people with peripheral arterial disease to reduce heart attacks, strokes, and amputations and to improve quality of life;

Whereas many patients with peripheral arterial disease are still untreated with proven therapies;

Whereas there is a need for comprehensive educational efforts designed to increase awareness of peripheral arterial disease among medical professionals and the greater public in order to promote early detection and proper treatment of this disease to improve quality of life, prevent heart attacks and strokes, and save lives and limbs; and

Whereas September 18 through September 22, 2006, would be an appropriate week to observe National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week;

(2) supports efforts to educate people about peripheral arterial disease;

(3) acknowledges the critical importance of peripheral arterial disease awareness to improve national cardiovascular health;

(4) supports raising awareness of the consequences of undiagnosed and untreated peripheral arterial disease and the need to seek appropriate care as a serious public health issue; and

(5) calls upon the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate programs and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 982, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week.

While not as well known as many other vascular diseases, peripheral artery disease is a serious illness that affects millions of Americans. It occurs when narrowed arteries reduce blood flow to the limbs. The disease increases the risk of heart attack and stroke and is also a leading cause of lower limb amputation in the United States. But perhaps the most alarming statistic of all is that most people who suffer from peripheral arterial disease have no symptoms and do not know that they have the disease.

This resolution, with the goal of raising awareness of this deadly disease and its warning signs, was authored by my friend and colleague on the Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health, Mrs. CAPPS of California. I would like to thank Mrs.

CAPPS and her staff for their leadership and work on this important resolution. I look forward to hearing more about the disease and its impact on our Nation's cardiovascular health.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I support House Resolution 982, sponsored by my colleague Congresswoman CAPPS from California.

Madam Speaker, peripheral arterial disease is a serious ailment that affects millions of Americans. This resolution will help to draw attention to this problem by recognizing September 18 through 22 as Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week, and it is my hope that this recognition, along with educational efforts on the part of the research and medical communities, will help make this a problem we can overcome.

There are more than 8 million people in the U.S., one in 20 adults, that have peripheral arterial disease. This is a vascular disease that results in the narrowing of arteries and decreased blood flow to the limbs. It could lead to leg pain disability and even amputation. And, sadly, the disease often goes unrecognized because the symptoms include common symptoms of old age, such as fatigue, heaviness, pain and cramping in the leg muscles when walking.

In addition, Madam Speaker, this disease increases the risk of heart attack and stroke in people, making it six times more likely they will die within 10 years when compared with those who do not have peripheral arterial disease. Those at most risk for peripheral arterial disease are people over the age of 50, those who smoke, have diabetes, high blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol, or have a history of heart disease or stroke. In addition, African Americans have a greater risk of getting peripheral arterial disease.

Because of the serious consequences of this disease that affects both women and men and can strike adults of any age, it is important for Congress to support public awareness activities on peripheral arterial disease. Recognizing September 18–22 of this year as National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week will help bring this deadly disease out of the shadows. And, Madam Speaker, as a part of this week of recognition, we need to encourage outreach activities to educate people about peripheral arterial disease. The public must understand that it is a serious public health issue; and given our awareness of these high-risk populations, education and early intervention could greatly benefit and decrease the incidents of peripheral arterial disease and improve the quality of life.

Once again, I would indicate our support of this resolution.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 982, to support the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week. I was proud to introduce this bill with my colleague and fellow co-chair of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition, Representative FOLEY.

More than 8 million Americans, that is 1 in 20 adults, have peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

Yet this condition is largely unrecognized and often goes undiagnosed because most people do not have any recognizable symptoms.

PAD occurs when arteries in the legs become narrowed or clogged, resulting in reduced blood flow to the legs.

A diagnosis of PAD is indication that a patient is likely to have narrowed arteries to the heart and brain as well and is a powerful warning sign of existing cardiovascular disease.

However, without early detection and proper treatment, 1 in 4 people who suffer from PAD will also suffer a heart attack, stroke, amputation or even death within the next 5 years.

It is evident that greater awareness about PAD and better detection capabilities will not only improve the quality of life for those who suffer from it, but can actually save their lives.

During National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week, efforts are increased to make physicians and the public at-large more cognizant of their risks for PAD, the symptoms, and the importance of early treatment.

During this week, we can assist by highlighting those who have high risk factors for PAD: over age 50, African Americans, smokers and those with high blood pressure, diabetes, abnormal cholesterol, a personal history of heart disease or stroke.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution and encourage them to learn more about Peripheral Arterial Disease and how it may affect them.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 982.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF OBSERVING THE YEAR OF POLIO AWARENESS

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 526) supporting the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 526

Whereas 2005 was the 50th anniversary of the injectable killed polio vaccine;

Whereas the polio vaccines eliminated naturally occurring polio cases in the United States but have not yet eliminated polio in other parts of the world;

Whereas as few as 57 percent of American children receive all doses of necessary vaccines during childhood, including the polio vaccine;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that every child in the United States receive all doses of the inactivated polio vaccine;

Whereas the success of the polio vaccines has caused people to forget the 1,630,000 Americans born before the development of the vaccines who had polio during the epidemics in the middle of the 20th century;

Whereas at least 70 percent of paralytic polio survivors and 40 percent of nonparalytic polio survivors are developing post-polio sequelae, which are unexpected and often disabling symptoms that occur about 35 years after the poliovirus attack, including overwhelming fatigue, muscle weakness, muscle and joint pain, sleep disorders, heightened sensitivity to anesthesia, cold pain, and difficulty swallowing and breathing;

Whereas 2006 is the 132nd anniversary of the diagnosis of the first case of post-polio sequelae and is the 21st anniversary of the creation of the International Post-Polio Task Force;

Whereas research and clinical work by members of the International Post-Polio Task Force have discovered that post-polio sequelae can be treated, and even prevented, if polio survivors are taught to conserve energy and use assistive devices to stop damaging and killing the reduced number of overworked, poliovirus-damaged neurons in the spinal cord and brain that survived the polio attack;

Whereas many medical professionals, and polio survivors, do not know of the existence of post-polio sequelae, or of the available treatments;

Whereas the mission of the International Post-Polio Task Force includes educating medical professionals and the world's 20,000,000 polio survivors about post-polio sequelae through the international Post-Polio Letter Campaign, The Post-Polio Institute at New Jersey's Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, the publication of The Polio Paradox, and the television public service announcement provided by the National Broadcasting Company; and

Whereas it would be appropriate to observe the year beginning October 1, 2006, as the Year of Polio Awareness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the need for every child, in America and throughout the world, to be vaccinated against polio;

(2) recognizes the 1,630,000 Americans who survived polio, their new battle with post-polio sequelae, and the need for education and appropriate medical care;

(3) requests that all appropriate Federal departments and agencies take steps to educate—

(A) the people of the United States about the need for polio vaccination; and

(B) polio survivors and medical professionals in the United States about the cause and treatment of post-polio sequelae; and

(4) supports the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness to promote vaccination and post-polio sequelae education and treatment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 526, a resolution authored by Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey that supports the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness. I commend Representative ROTHMAN for introducing this important resolution, which helps to raise awareness about polio and the continued need to vaccinate all children against polio and other infectious diseases.

While many of us in this Chamber are old enough to remember polio as a national tragedy that claimed thousands of lives and left thousands more permanently disabled, younger generations may have only read about polio in history books. But the story of polio, its spread, its dreaded consequences, the millions of lives it touched, and our ultimate triumph over the disease, should forever remain etched in our national memory.

Recently, the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of American History held an exhibit commemorating the 50th anniversary of the injectable, killed polio vaccine, also known as the Salk vaccine. The exhibit detailed the incredible story of polio in the United States, beginning with the 1916 outbreak in New York City that paralyzed 9,000 people and killed 2,400, most of whom were children less than 10 years of age. It went on to tell visitors about the all-consuming race to find a vaccine, from the story of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who may have been paralyzed by polio and went on to found the March of Dimes, the organization that raised hundreds of millions of dollars for polio research and treatment, and for which President Roosevelt's image was etched on the United States dime; to the research efforts led by Jonas Salk, Albert Sabin, and others to come up with a vaccine that was safe and effective; to the mammoth public health effort needed to vaccinate all children in the United States once a workable vaccine had been found; and, finally, to the worldwide effort to eradicate polio in the latter 20th century. The fight against polio is an amazing story that deserves to be remembered and retold.

But like most museum exhibits, the most striking things about the exhibits were the images. On display were several iron lungs, the metal apparatuses that helped to keep children and adults with polio alive. These metal contraptions restricted all movement and were mostly small because they primarily housed children. They were necessary to help polio patients continue to breathe. Photographs depicted huge warehouses that had been converted to makeshift hospital wards, filled with rows of iron lungs and the children inside.

Other pictures showed parents standing on ladders and soap boxes, peering through hospital windows, trying to see their children who had been quarantined. Such pictures are painful reminders of a past that should never be relived.

The resolution before us today reminds all of us that we have all the tools needed to prevent the reemergence of polio in this century. By far the most crucial weapon in the fight against infectious disease is vaccination, the medical advance that has saved more lives than any other. Vaccines continue to serve as the first line of defense against infectious disease. The resolution rightly recognizes the need of every child to be vaccinated against polio. It also recognizes the 1.6 million Americans who survived polio, but still suffer from its effects today.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise to support House Resolution 526, which supports the observation of the Year of Polio Awareness.

I do want to thank the sponsor of the legislation, my colleague from New Jersey Representative STEVE ROTHMAN, for not only sponsoring this bill, but also for all of his efforts to increase awareness of polio. He will be speaking just a few minutes later.

Polio, as you know, is a viral illness that destroys nerve cells. As a result, muscles become paralyzed, and these muscles can atrophy and die. Polio is most common in infants and young children; however, complications occur most often in older persons and often post-polio.

Those complications have the often disabling symptoms of overwhelming fatigue, muscle weakness and pain, sleep disorders and more. It occurs in 75 percent of paralytic and 40 percent of nonparalytic polio survivors about 35 years after the polio virus attacks.

Although polio has plagued humans since ancient times, its extensive outbreak occurred in the first half of the 1900s before the vaccination created by Jonas Salk became widely available in 1955. And I would say, Madam Speaker, that I certainly am old enough to remember when there were many people who were struck by polio. And in the 1950s, when I was growing up, the fact that there was a vaccine available was just seen as an amazing thing. It was very much on the minds of all of us as we were growing up in the 1950s and the 1960s.

Sadly, despite having a vaccine against polio, this disease has not been eradicated from the world, and outbreaks continue to occur in the U.S. and other countries. As a matter of fact, it seems we are headed in the wrong direction. The World Health Organization announced last year that they would not meet their intended goal of eliminating new cases of polio worldwide by the end of 2005, since many cases remained.

The hope is that this resolution and the new resurgence of focus on polio will promote increased vaccination and education and treatment of post-polio complications. Even today, Madam Speaker, 10 percent of American children under the age 3 do not receive their polio vaccine. This percentage is lower in poor cities. Given new cases being reported in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Egypt, Niger, Ethiopia and Yemen, an outbreak in the U.S. would not be surprising. And last year four cases of the polio virus were reported in Minnesota.

The eradication of new polio cases is achievable, but only if we reeducate the public about the dangers, effects and availability or a vaccine and treatment. This resolution asks all appropriate Federal agencies to take action to educate the people of the U.S. about the polio vaccine, and to educate polio survivors and medical professionals about the existence of post-polio complications and available treatments.

Therefore, I support this resolution recognizing a Year of Polio Awareness beginning on November 1.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time with the intention of closing.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague STEVE ROTHMAN, who, again, has taken a lead on this and so many other health care issues.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, first let me thank my colleague from New Jersey for giving me this time, and all of your efforts to increase polio awareness.

I would like to thank Chairman DEAL for all of your hard work as the chairman of this subcommittee in bringing this matter to the floor, and for all of your support. I would also like to recognize the role of Ranking Member SHERROD BROWN for his help.

Madam Speaker, I first want to thank the leadership of the Energy and Commerce Committee for bringing Resolution 526 to the floor. I also want to take this opportunity to recognize my constituent, a very tireless worker on behalf of those suffering the aftereffects of polio, Dr. Richard Bruno.

As the director of the Post-Polio Institute and International Center for

Post-Polio Education and Research at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, and chairperson of the International Post-Polio Task Force, Dr. Bruno is at the forefront of the movement to educate parents about the need to vaccinate their children against this debilitating virus.

This resolution, Madam Chairman, would not be on the floor today without Doctor Bruno's help. I am grateful for his work and commitment to this cause.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution, 526, that will bring critical attention in the United States and around the world to the need for children to be vaccinated against polio. It sounds so simple. So many of us thought that polio had been eradicated, but that is far from the truth.

This resolution recognizes the need for every child to be vaccinated against polio and designates the year starting October 1st as the Year of Polio Awareness. It also urges all Federal agencies to educate doctors and parents about polio, and to also educate polio survivors and medical professionals about the cause and treatment of something called post-polio sequelae. More about that later.

It has been 51 years since the introduction of the polio vaccination. By now this virus should have been eradicated. But as has been said earlier by our chairman and Mr. PALLONE, this is not the case. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control, 10 percent of the U.S. children under 3 years of age, which is approximately 1 million toddlers in our country, are not vaccinated against polio.

This percentage is even greater in America's poorest cities. Even more of our young people are not vaccinated against polio. In my own home State of New Jersey, only 86 percent of the toddlers living in Newark were vaccinated in 2004. Furthermore, the United States is not protected against a polio outbreak. In October of 2005, five children in an Amish community in Minnesota were diagnosed with polio. Although that outbreak was ultimately brought under control, this was a clear signal that we must do more in our country to prevent the spread of polio.

Polio outbreaks, Madam Speaker, are not only limited to occurring in the United States, but have, for example, as my colleagues have said, been reported in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Somali, Afghanistan, Egypt, Niger, Ethiopia and Yemen, amongst other countries.

In some way the polio vaccination has become a victim of its own success, one might say, with many Americans believing that polio has been eradicated. They no longer have their children vaccinated against this virus. That is a mistake. With outbreaks occurring all over the world, unvaccinated children everywhere, including in the United States, are susceptible to exposure and to catching polio. That is why this resolution is so important.

Madam Speaker, parents must be informed when making decisions about vaccinating their children. They have to know that there is still a threat that their child could be exposed to the polio virus. This resolution will help ensure that doctors will provide all of the necessary information to parents about the polio vaccine and the dangers of the virus.

I hope that the passage of this resolution will accomplish our goal of raising awareness of the importance of having every child vaccinated against polio, and will have the effect of allowing doctors to understand this post-polio sequelae syndrome, which is that after someone has lived a whole lifetime with polio, they then suffer a series of additional complications: chronic overwhelming fatigue, joint pain, and chronic pain of a variety of natures.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this resolution, which will educate our own people and all of the people of the world to the continuing threat of polio.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, once again, we support this resolution and thank the sponsor, my colleague from New Jersey, for introducing it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, certainly as we talk about the elimination of polio, it is one of the great success stories, but one in which we must continue to be vigilant, as has been pointed out. As a Rotarian, I am proud that my organization, on an international basis, undertook as a project to eliminate polio worldwide, poured millions of dollars into that effort, and contributed greatly to the success of the elimination of polio in other parts of the world.

But as we talk about the polio vaccine, a disease that has been able to be treated with a vaccine, we are also on the verge of recognizing that we are going to have, as we currently have, a problem with vaccine manufacturers for not only this disease, but many other diseases as well.

Today we only have four United States vaccine manufacturers. That is down from about 50 that we had back in the 1960s. The bipartisan Institute of Medicine has identified three primary factors as the reason we have lost vaccine firms and for the reluctance of firms to get into the manufacturing of vaccines.

One is the economic realities, and certainly those are very real; secondly, the burdensome regulations that they must go through; and third, legal liability. As we deal with other diseases, in addition to this question of polio, we are going to be faced with the fact that we are going to have to encourage manufacturers of vaccines to get in the marketplace, and we must deal with those three factors as we move forward on this issue of vaccines for other illnesses as well.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 526 supporting the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness.

During the 1940's and 1950's, between 30,000 and 50,000 cases of polio were recorded annually in the United States. This epidemic caused widespread fear and panic because of its devastating effects. Such effects include muscle and nerve damage, as well as the inability to move one's limbs or to breathe without assistance. The polio virus can also lead to a number of severe illnesses.

Fortunately, the injectable polio vaccine eliminated naturally-occurring polio cases in the United States, but unfortunately has not yet eliminated polio in other parts of the world.

The Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention recommends that every child in the United States receive all doses of the inactivated polio vaccine; yet as few as 57 percent of American children receive all doses of necessary vaccines during childhood, including the polio vaccine.

At least 70 percent of paralytic polio survivors, and 40 percent of nonparalytic polio survivors, are developing post-polio sequelae. Post Polio Sequelae are late effects of the disease that can occur 35 years after the poliovirus attack in 75 percent of paralytic and 40 percent of ''non-paralytic'' polio survivors. Because they present so long after an individual is ill, these effects are unexpected and are often unrecognized: fatigue, muscle weakness, muscle and joint pain, sleep disorders, heightened sensitivity to anesthesia, cold pain, and difficulty swallowing and breathing.

This year marks the 132nd anniversary of the diagnosis of the first case of post-polio sequelae and the 20th anniversary of the creation of the International Post-Polio Task Force. The mission of the International Post-Polio Task Force includes educating medical professionals and the 20,000,000 polio survivors in the world about post-polio sequelae through letter campaigns, public service announcements, and other forms of media.

I cannot understate the importance of the work of the International Post-Polio Task Force. Because many medical professionals and polio survivors do not generally know of the existence of post-polio sequelae or of the available treatments, it is vital that we continue to support efforts by organizations such as the International Polio Task Force to increase the awareness of the debilitating effects of polio.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and urge the adoption of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 526, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING MARY ELIZA MAHONEY, AMERICA'S FIRST PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED AFRICAN-AMERICAN NURSE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 386) honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 386

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney was born May 7, 1845, in Dorchester, Massachusetts, to Charles Mahoney and Mary Jane Seward Mahoney;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney, at the age of 33, was accepted as a student nurse at the hospital-based program of nursing at the New England Hospital for Women and Children;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney was one of four students, of a class of 40, who completed nursing at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in 1879;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney devoted her time and efforts unselfishly to the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses and was installed as the Official Chaplin;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney's motto was ''Work more and better the coming year than the previous year.'';

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney delivered the first annual key note speech of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses and established the Mary Eliza award, which today continues as the Mary Eliza Mahoney Award bestowed biennially by the American Nurses Association;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney supported the suffrage movement and was the first African-American professionally trained nurse to receive retirement benefits from a fund left by a Boston physician to care for 60 nurses, who received twenty-five dollars every three months as long as they lived;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney's gravesite is in Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett, Massachusetts, and the headstone on her grave states, ''The First Professional Negro Nurse in the U.S.A.'';

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney was inducted into the American Nurses Association Hall of Fame in 1976;

Whereas Mary Eliza Mahoney advanced the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice and confronting issues affecting professional nurses, such as the shortage of nurses;

Whereas today the shortage of nurses is a crisis, estimated to be 110,000 nurses, and is expected to increase to 2,800,000 by 2020 if this trend continues; and

Whereas nursing is a critical investment to the delivery of high-quality, cost-effective patient care, and the Nation should invest in and value nursing care: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) honors Mary Eliza Mahoney, the first African-American nurse for an outstanding nursing career, dedication to the United States nursing profession, and exemplary contributions to local and national professional nursing organizations;

(2) recognizes Mary Eliza Mahoney as the first professionally trained African-American nurse, and honors other African-American nurses who practice nursing with distinction;

(3) honors and supports the goals and activities of National Nurses Week;

(4) promotes further understanding and public awareness of the history of American nurses, who practiced nursing with compassion and devotion and transmitted new scientific knowledge using science-based nursing practice; and

(5) advocates for women of color to enter nursing and supports strategies to counteract the shortage of nurses.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 386, honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, as America's first professionally trained African American nurse.

Born in 1845, Mary Eliza Mahoney lived with her parents, Charles Mahoney and Mary Jane Steward Mahoney. For 15 years, Mary Eliza worked alternately as a cook, janitor, washerwoman, and an unofficial nurse's assistant at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

In 1878, at the age of 33, she was admitted as a student into the hospital's nursing program. After graduation, 16 months later, Mary Eliza worked primarily as a private-duty nurse. Her nursing career ended as director of an orphanage in Long Island, New York, a position she had held for over a decade.

As the resolution states, Mary Eliza Mahoney's motto was always, ''Work more and better the coming year than the previous year.'' Mahoney also recognized the need of nurses for nurses to work together to improve the status of African Americans in the profession.

In 1908, she was the cofounder of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses. Mahoney gave the welcoming address at the first convention of NACGN and served as the association's national chaplain. She became an inspiration to all nurses and helped make it possible for the members of the NACGN to be received at the White House by President Warren G. Harding.

Ms. Mahoney died in 1926. Because of her dedication and untiring will to inspire future generations, she has been an inspiration to thousands who are a part of the nursing profession.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the author of this resolution, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for her leadership in honoring this great American. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of the resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it is not every day that we get to pay tribute to a truly special person that served our country like Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African American nurse. I want to indicate my support for H. Con. Resolution 386 offered by Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney's outstanding nursing career, her dedication to the U.S. nursing profession, and exemplary contribution to local and national professional nursing organizations.

Ms. Mahoney was born in 1845 and grew up in an era where many similarly situated African Americans did not have the opportunity for an education. Ms. Mahoney, however, enrolled in nursing school. In 1879, at the age of 34, she was one of only a handful of students in her class who graduated, and the only African American in her class.

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Ms. Mahoney changed the face of nursing as the first African American woman. Afterwards, black students were accepted at school as long as they met the requirements. Not only did she pave the way for African Americans as nurses, she advocated for them. Moreover, she worked hard to counteract the nationwide shortage of nurses, which, of course, continues today.

In 1896, Ms. Mahoney became one of the original members of a predominantly white nurses association, alumni of the United States and Canada, later known as the American Nurses Association, or ANA. In 1908, she was cofounder of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.

In addition, Madam Speaker, she supported the voting rights amendment and was the first African American nurse to receive retirement benefits for her lifelong hard work and service to others.

The contributions of people like Mary Eliza Mahoney should be remembered. She set an example more than a century ago that I hope many children today will follow: Work hard, follow your convictions and help others.

The U.S. is expected to have a shortage of 2.8 million nurses by the year 2020, and Congress has to do a lot more to recognize the support, the work of America's nurses both through resolutions like these and through greater funding. Ms. Mahoney was a remarkable woman. We should not let what she fought for so long ago be for naught. That is why I think it is very important that we pass and support this resolution this afternoon.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 386, honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse.

First, I would like to honor my mother, Ivalita Jackson, who served as a vocational nurse

while she raised her children. With her nurturing hand and wise mind, she instilled in me a strong work ethic, a value of education, and a compelling desire toward public service. Her lifetime of hard work, and her commitment to giving and healing remains an inspiration to me.

Mary Eliza Mahoney was born on May 7th, 1845 in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Mary became interested in nursing as a teenager. Though she worked as a maid, washerwoman and cook at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Roxbury, Massachusetts for fifteen years, her dream was to practice nursing.

The first step to realizing her dream came when, at the age of 33, Ms. Mahoney was accepted into the nursing school at the New England Hospital for Women and Children. One of only four students of a class of forty two to complete the nursing program, Mahoney received her nursing diploma on August 1, 1879.

As such, she became the first African-American graduate nurse. This indeed, was a magnificent accomplishment at a time in this country when the odds were heavily stacked against her as an African-American, and as a woman.

After graduation, Ms. Mahoney became a private duty nurse. Her employers consistently praised her for her calm and quiet efficiency and for her professionalism.

Despite the odds, she proved that African-Americans could successfully enter into the world of professional nursing. She continues to be a source of inspiration to all nurses.

Mahoney was one of the first African-American members of the organization that later became the American Nurses Association (A.N.A.). When the A.N.A. failed to actively admit black nurses, Mahoney strongly supported the establishment of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (N.A.C.G.N.).

Mahoney recognized the inequalities in nursing education and called for a demonstration at the New England Hospital to have more African-American students admitted.

For more than a decade after, Mahoney helped recruit nurses to join the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses. Today, nursing is the nation's largest health care profession, with more than 2.7 million registered nurses nationwide. In 2003, 9.9 percent of registered nurses were African American.

Ms. Mahoney was strongly concerned with women's equality and was a staunch supporter of the movement to give women the right to vote. At the age of 76, Ms. Mahoney was among the first women in Boston to register to vote after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

At a time in our country when there is a nurse-shortage crisis, it is important to acknowledge the service and dedication of an outstanding American nurse. More than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. Ms. Mahoney is a prime example of a professional woman who values and advocates for education, civil rights, and giving something of yourself for your community and for your nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 386, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 622) to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 622

Whereas in 1898, the Philippines Archipelago was acquired by the United States, became an organized United States territory in 1902, and, in preparation for independence, became a self-governing commonwealth in 1935;

Whereas the people of the Philippines and of the United States developed strong ties throughout the decades-long democratic transition of the island, compelling the United States to assume the responsibilities of defending the archipelago and protecting the people of the Philippines;

Whereas on July 26, 1941, anticipating the aggression of Japanese invasion forces in the Asia Pacific region, as well as the imminent conflict between the United States and Japan, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a military order, calling the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines into armed service under the command of United States Army officers led by General Douglas MacArthur;

Whereas on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Government began a devastating four-year war with the United States with their stealth bombing attacks of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Clark Air Field, Philippines, and led to the loss of tens of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers and countless civilian casualties;

Whereas on February 20, 1946, President Harry Truman stated, ''Philippine Army veterans are nationals of the United States and will continue in that status until July 4, 1946. They fought, as American nationals, under the American flag, and under the direction of our military leaders. They fought with gallantry and courage under most difficult conditions. I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Philippine Army veterans.'';

Whereas on October 17, 1996, President William J. Clinton issued a proclamation on the anniversary of the 1944 return of United States forces under General MacArthur to liberate the Philippines and said, ''I urge all Americans to recall the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino Veterans of World War II and honor them for their contribution to our freedom.'';

Whereas on July 26, 2001, President George W. Bush, in his greetings to the Filipino World War II veterans said, ''More than 120,000 Filipinos fought with unwavering loyalty and great gallantry under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. The combined United States-Philippine forces distinguished themselves by their valor and heroism in defense of freedom and democracy. Thousands of Filipino soldiers gave their lives in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. These soldiers won for the United States the precious time needed to disrupt the enemy's plan for conquest in the Pacific. During the three long years following these battles, the Filipino people valiantly resisted a brutal Japanese occupation with an indomitable spirit and steadfast loyalty to America.''; and

Whereas the contributions of the Filipino people, and the sacrifices of their soldiers in World War II, have not been fully recognized: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes and honors Filipino World War II veterans for their important contributions to the victorious outcome of World War II, including their valiant fight for the liberation of their homeland and their defense of democratic ideals.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 622, which recognizes and honors Filipino World War II veterans for their important contributions to the victorious outcome of World War II.

This resolution notes that the prior history of the Philippines as a United States territory, then as a self-governing commonwealth, during which time the Filipino Armed Forces were called into service under the command of General Douglas MacArthur in July 1941. Those servicemen fought with gallantry and courage, and thousands gave their lives resisting Japanese aggression and occupation. House Resolution 622 honors those Filipino veterans for their valiant fight, for the liberation of their homeland, and for their defense of democratic ideals.

I commend the cochair of the Philippine Caucus, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), for introducing this long overdue resolution. It was moved forward with the strong support of the chairman of the House International Relations Committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

My colleagues may not be aware that Chairman HYDE was a combat veteran of the Philippine campaign in World War II, and he piloted a landing craft

in the January 1945 landing that marked the beginning of the liberation of Luzon.

Madam Speaker, I submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a copy of an article from the September 10, 2006, edition of Philippine Panorama, the leading weekly news magazine in the Philippines.

[From the Philippine Panorama, Sept. 10, 2006]

MEMORIES OF LINGAYEN

(By Beth Day Romulo)

Henry Hyde, chairman of the US House International Relations Committee, led a group of four congressmen, including Melvin Watt of North Carolina, Dana Rohrabacher of California, Jeff Flake of Arizona and Eni Faleomavaega of Samoa, on a visit to the Philippines (August 11th to 15th) to assess security in this country, discuss trade relations and, in the case of the 82-year old chairman, he hoped to visit with fellow veterans of World War Two, and see Lingayen Gulf again.

As a college freshman at Georgetown University, Hyde enlisted in the Navy in 1942. Why the Navy? He had never been to sea but liked the idea of ''a nice clean ship'' in comparison to life in a trench. ''It didn't occur to me that ships sink,'' he recalled wryly in an interview at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel where the group were staying. After an officers training program at Duke University, he attended a 90-day midshipmen's school at Notre Dame and won his commission as an Ensign in October 1944. Told that he would go to commanders school at Harvard, he bought new blue uniforms as befit the occasion which he never wore, since his orders were suddenly changed and he was sent to sea in the Pacific theater, as part of the operation to liberate the Philippines.

Having never been at sea before, he became deathly seasick on his first night out of San Francisco, recovered on the third day and was fortunately never seasick again despite the fact that the Liberty ship took 30 days to reach Hollandia, New Guinea, zigzagging to miss Japanese submarines.

Joining the flotilla of supply ships offshore of the Philippines in January 1945, young Ensign Hyde was assigned command of an amphibious Landing Craft Tank (LCT), a flat-bottomed vessel with a ramp that could tow supplies to shore and unload on beaches. He had 12 crew members, all considerably older than he, so ''I grew a full beard.'' The big ships couldn't come ashore, so it was the duty of the LCT to load from the big ships (''at night and we couldn't use lights'') everything from trucks (LCT could carry five at a time) weapons, ammunition, supplies, and occasionally personnel. By this time, General MacArthur had made his historic landing at Leyte and by March 1945, the Americans controlled Manila and Subic Bay and the Japanese army had withdrawn to the North.

After two or three days at sea, water washed over the craft and filled the pontoons. The radio man was frantically calling ''we are sinking'' to the towing vessel and signaling with the blinker. Hyde recalls with wry humor that he was running around with a mattress ''trying to hold back the South China Sea.'' Eventually, the tow ship got the message and cut loose the lines which dragged down the LCT, and they limped into Lingayen.

Sent on a special mission to Aparri on the northern tip of Luzon, they arrived at a beach which had no grading. ''It was like a wall.'' They couldn't move onto shore, so came in as close as they could. The deserted beach suddenly swarmed with people who came out from the trees and bushes and waded out to unload their cargo. They were guerillas in dire need of supplies.

While not engaging in combat, the LCT was often under fire from enemy aircraft who dropped bombs near them ''but we were too busy to notice.''

At another time, Hyde's LCT was given a special mission to salvage the supplies from a Liberty Ship which had foundered on rocks and was lying on its side. They were sent, he found later, because a typhoon was coming and military brass didn't want to lose all the cargo. A destroyer escort took the LCT out to the grounded ship, then disappeared. They tied up to the starboard, started loading and the typhoon hit before they were finished. ''This taught me what real terror means.'' The LCT was banging helplessly against the ship. The wind blew off the conning tower and Hyde was convinced he would lose both his craft and his men. They donned their life-jackets, fully expecting to be washed overboard. ''I'll never forget it,'' Hyde recalled. ''The sky was green. The sea was green. And our complexions were green.''

Eventually, they were able to cut the lines free from the ship, and Ensign Hyde guided his craft through the swelling seas. in the direction he thought he would lead to Subic Bay. He was in luck. After all-night winds and heavy swells, dawn came. The storm was gone. And they could see Subic Bay. They unloaded their cargo. The LCT was repaired, and they headed back to the grounded ship for a second load. Getting out all the supplies and transporting them to. Subic Bay took a week in all.

Lighter moments came when the administrative ship in the flotilla distributed mail from home, and when they had shore leave. After Manila was liberated, there was ''a great officers club'' where we sat around, sipped beer, and told football stories. Sometimes, they played basketball with college students.

Hyde remembers spending his 21st birthday walking alone on the beach at Lingayen, wondering if he would ever see home again. Other young officers, with wives and children awaiting them, were allowed to' leave first. He was finally sent home in August 1946. When the ship was nearing San Francisco, he rose at 3 a.m. and went out on deck to wait for the sight of the lights on the bridge of San Francisco loom through the mist. ''It was the happiest moment of my life.''

When he had first sailed on the Liberty ship for the Philippines, a submarine was just coming in from the South China Sea, and the men coming and going waved at one another. He wondered then what they had experienced. Now, he knew.

Congressman Hyde was able to greet a large number of Philippine veterans at a wreath-laying ceremony at the American Cemetery in Ft. Bonifacio, some of whom had called upon him in his home constancy. He was also awarded the Philippine Liberation Medal by AFP Major General Horacio Tolentino in a ceremony on August 12th in recognition of his service during the Liberation of the Philippines.

Discovering the difficulties of getting to Lingayen by land, he flew over it instead, which inspired these memories.

The article profiles Chairman HYDE's service in the Philippines and describes, among many others things, his interaction with Filipino servicemen who were waging a guerilla campaign against the Imperial Japanese Army at that time.

I am grateful to have this opportunity today to express our appreciation to those veterans, both Filipino and Americans, who are with us. This resolution is a fitting tribute to their heroism and sacrifice and deserves our unanimous support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I first would like to commend my California colleague DARRELL ISSA for introducing this important measure. I also want to thank the chairman of our committee HENRY HYDE for letting this resolution move to the floor so expeditiously.

Madam Speaker, the measure before the House honors the contributions of Filipino Americans during the Second World War. You might be surprised to learn that I represent the largest concentration of Filipinos outside of Manila. Among my constituents are tens of thousands of Filipino American families, so it is with great pleasure that I cosponsor this legislation and serve as the Democratic manager of this resolution on the floor today.

Filipino Americans have made an enormous contribution to the cultural, political and economic life of my congressional district, particularly in the community of Daly City. Outside of Honolulu, Daly City is the largest city in the United States with a majority Asian population, and most of this population is Filipino American.

Their contributions to our Nation are not a recent phenomenon. More than 120,000 Filipinos fought under the command of General Douglas MacArthur during World War II. Filipino soldiers played a critical role in stopping the Japanese advance throughout the Pacific. During 3 long years of Japanese occupation, Filipinos helped to liberate their homeland and ultimately to defeat the Japanese warmaking machine.

That is why I am so pleased that we are moving forward with this resolution honoring the contributions of Filipino World War II veterans, many of whom are still with us.

It is my strong hope that passage of this measure will pave the way for congressional consideration of the long overdue Filipino Veterans Equity Act. This important legislation would allow Filipino veterans to become eligible for a range of United States veterans benefits currently reserved for former Active Duty military personnel.

Given the enormous contributions made by the Filipinos to the war in the Pacific, it is imperative that Filipino veterans finally receive the benefits they deserve.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to a fighter for Filipino veterans rights, my friend and colleague from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. I thank Congressman LANTOS for your leadership in the fight for benefits, and your chairman, Mr. HYDE, and the sponsor of this legislation, Mr. ISSA. Along with my colleague from San Diego County, Mr. ISSA, we chair the Congressional U.S.-Philippines Caucus, and Mr. ISSA is the prime sponsor of the equity bill which you talked about, H.R. 4574, to bring real justice to our Filipino American and Filipino veterans.

We all know, or we all should know, the impact of the Filipino soldiers on World War II. They endured the original Japanese advance. They held them up far beyond their calendar, allowed MacArthur and the U.S. Army to have more time. As guerillas, they kept the Japanese busy for the 4 years that they were occupied, and then helped prepare the way for General MacArthur's return and our eventual victory in the Pacific.

We know their great contribution to American history, but we have repaid this great contribution with words. My friend, the doctor from Florida, said this is a long overdue resolution, and it is a fitting tribute.

Well, 10 years ago this body, or 10 years ago, President Clinton said this same thing: I urge all Americans to recall the courage, sacrifice and loyalty of Filipino veterans of World War II and honor them. Five years ago President Bush sent his greetings, which said the same thing: We thank you all for this work.

But nobody since 1946 has done what President Truman tried to say: I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Filipino Army veterans. They were drafted into the American Army. They were promised benefits.

But in 1946, this Congress, only Mr. LANTOS was here, I think, at the time, this Congress passed a Rescissions Act, which cut the benefits and cut the recognition that they were promised by President Roosevelt and President Truman.

□ 1530

This is wrong, my colleagues; and yet Mr. ISSA, as the sponsor of this resolution, also is the sponsor of the real answer to this situation and the real tribute that we could pay to these veterans, all of whom now are in their 80s. They are a rapidly dwindling band of patriots. What they want is honor and dignity, and that is provided by H.R. 4574, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. I hope that Mr. LANTOS is right, that this resolution will pave the way. I am afraid it will be an excuse for not doing anything more.

Let us pass this resolution. It helps educate us and our constituents about the role of the Filipino veterans in World War II. But let us go further. Let us pass the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which provides access to health care and access to pensions of those Filipinos who are eligible.

They don't have long to live, Madam Speaker. They want the honor and dignity that was denied them after World War II. So let us give a fitting tribute and let us do a long overdue action of this Congress. Let us pass H.R. 4574, which will be our true tribute to these brave men.

I thank Mr. ISSA for introducing this resolution. Let us approve it, but let us move on beyond this and truly recognize those who contributed so much to this Nation's freedom and independence.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend and distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding. I rise in strong support of this resolution.

On December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan attacked not only Pearl Harbor, but also Clark Airfield in the Philippines. Tens of thousands of Americans died that day, but also thousands of Filipino soldiers lost their lives. This one act of war united the American and Filipino people in the noble cause of ending tyranny in the Pacific.

In 1946, President Harry Truman cited that during the war the Philippine Army veterans ''fought with gallantry and courage under the most difficult conditions.'' He also declared that it was the ''moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Philippine Army veterans.'' In fact, it was with that promise that many of the veterans joined our military efforts, many losing their lives, others suffering lifetime injuries.

Our promise, however, remains unfulfilled. We promised to make them eligible for veterans benefits, but, unfortunately, in 1946, Congress withdrew those benefits.

Now, nearly 60 years later, our Filipino veterans are still looking to see our promise fulfilled. We saw some progress in 2003 when we passed the Veterans Benefit Act, which increased VA benefits for U.S. residents who are Filipino veterans and made the new Philippine Scouts living in the United States eligible for burial in VA national cemeteries.

The United States is indebted to the 120,000 Filipino veterans of World War II for their extraordinary sacrifices. While we can never fully repay our veterans for the sacrifices made on our behalf, today we stop to remember those who gave their lives for our freedom and to thank those who are still with us for their courage and dedication to our country.

Although no longer a territory of the United States, the Philippines and the United States are bound by the countless sacrifices the Filipino veterans made during World War II. We are also bound by countless contributions and achievements of Americans of Filipino descent in every field of human endeavor, including the sciences, business, education, medicine, the arts, athletics, and government.

As the only Member of Congress with any Filipino ancestry, I am honored to come before the House today to honor the Filipino veterans of World War II and urge my colleagues not only to support this resolution, but to also pass legislation to grant the Filipino veterans the equity that they were promised.

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor and strong supporter of H. Res. 622, a resolution to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II. As a member of the U.S. Philippines Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am pleased that the House of Representatives is considering this important resolution and urge its passage.

Just this past weekend, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the President of the Republic of Philippines, visited my home State of Hawaii and unveiled at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific a commemorative marker honoring Filipinos and Americans who served in World War II. President Macapagal-Arroyo's presence underlines the continuing closeness and importance of the relationship between our two countries.

With more Filipino-Americans in my district than any other congressional district in the country, I was pleased that President George W. Bush, at my request, wrote a message on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of Filipino migration to Hawaii. We must also continue to celebrate and thank the early Filipino migrants who came to work in the sugar plantations of Hawaii and those who fought in support of the United States in World War II.

But there is still much more to be done in support of these brave individuals.

I have introduced legislation in both the 108th and l09th Congresses advancing the interests of the families of our Filipino World War II veterans, many of whom are still waiting in the Philippines to be reunited with their loved ones living in the United States. Earlier this Congress, I reintroduced the bill (H.R. 901) that provides for the sons and daughters of our Filipino World War II veterans to receive priority preference in their respective immigration categories.

Because of the grassroots support by many in Hawaii and across the country and in the Philippines, I am proud to say that Congress is on the verge of successfully advancing legislation that will enable the children of our Filipino World War II veterans to join their parents in the United States. The objectives of H.R. 901 were included in the Senate's version of comprehensive immigration reform legislation. I continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to secure this provision in conference or to pass the free-standing bill.

With the waning days of the 109th Congress upon us, we must stay vigilant and continue to urge Congress to make this and all issues affecting Filipino veterans a high priority in our busy Congressional schedule. I urge Congress to pass H. Res. 622 and to also consider H.R. 901 before the adjournment of the 109th Congress.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) for introducing this important measure. I ask all members to not only support this important resolution, but to also continue to support the full federal recognition and accessibility of benefits for Filipino veterans.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 622, to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

In 1941, 250,000 of Filipino men and women responded to President Roosevelt's call and joined the U.S. Armed Forces in order to help preserve peace and democracy in the Philippines.

In their tumultuous four-year battle to restore their independence, the courageous young men and women of the combined Philippine Islands suffered many hardships, tortures, loss of life and limbs, yet they never wavered. They endured the unendurable. They bore the unbearable.

Four decades after their heroic service under the command of their leaders and General Douglas McArthur, these men and women of Filipino-American national heritage were denied the benefits and privileges provided to their American compatriots who fought alongside them.

It is past time that the brave and proud soldiers of the Philippines receive well-earned recognition and thanks for their selfless and heroic contributions.

Filipino World War II veterans fought as nationals of the United States and must be given the same recognition and praise as all American veterans. I applaud the service and efforts of all of our veterans and am honored to give such praise to the Filipino World War II veterans.

I urge my colleagues not only to support this resolution—I urge my colleagues to also consider legislation, such as H.R. 170, the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act, that will grant these aging patriots the full benefits they are due.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, during World War II, the War in the Pacific began with attacks on the United States on December 7, 1941, including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, attacks on the Philippine Islands and the invasion of Guam. Within days of these attacks, our nation and our allies mobilized for war. The United States and the Philippines united behind the cause of democracy and we are proud of the support of the Filipinos during that difficult time. This is why I rise today in support of House Resolution 622, to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

Ultimate victory belonged to the cause of freedom and therefore to the American and Filipino people. Having suffered a brutal occupation, Filipinos and Guamanians alike were liberated in the march to allied victory in World War II.

Filipino soldiers and civilians fought, sacrificed and died side-by-side with members of the U.S. Armed Forces throughout the course of the World War II. Loyal to the American flag and to the ideals which our country represented, Filipinos fought with notable skill, dedication, and heroism. We honor their commitment to freedom and democracy.

Over sixty years later, we pause today to remember the valor and the commitment to freedom displayed by Filipinos who fought the invading forces alongside their American brothers in arms. With this resolution we also proclaim our deep debt of gratitude for their service and share the disappointment that our nation has not fully honored Filipino World War II veterans as have we have honored our own. It is important that we recognize the Filipino veterans and express our appreciation for their sacrifices, contributions and accomplishments.

I am a proud sponsor of this legislation. I urge my colleagues to honor Filipino veterans by voting in favor of this resolution to honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of freedom and their important contributions to our nation in World War II.

Mr. BILBRAY. Madam Speaker, today the House of Representatives is poised to pass House, Resolution 622 honoring and recognizing the service of Filipino World War II veterans in their defense of our society and the freedoms we enjoy today. I am proud to cosponsor this resolution highlighting the efforts of a community that came together with the United States to triumph over Japanese Imperialism.

In 1946, on a hot July day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a military draft calling the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines into armed services under the command of United States Army officers lead by General Douglas MacArthur. Those brave soldiers stood side by side with American military service members courageously fighting to defend America.

These Filipino World War II veterans are part of what is often referred to as the ''greatest generation'' and with good reason. From Bataan to Corregidor, Filipino soldiers unselfishly fought to preserve and protect the democratic principles we champion, with the hope that those principles could liberate a people enveloped by tyranny. Today, we stand to recognize those heroes who fought so valiantly to help win the peace in the Pacific.

Madam Speaker, in San Diego we have a vibrant and robust Filipino community that includes many military families with a storied line of military service to our nation. Through the sacrifices of these brave veterans, serve as an example for all Americans. The Filipino community in San Diego has a distinct pride that defines them, and for that they enrich San Diego and make it a better place to live.

I thank my colleague from California, Mr. ISSA, for introducing this legislation and I look forward to voting on its passage.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H. Res. 622, to, provide recognition to the Filipino veterans who fought to defend democracy and freedom during World War II. Their heroic efforts played a vital role in the outcome of the war and helped lead the allied forces to, victory.

It was more than 60 years ago, when Filipino, soldiers answered a call from President Roosevelt asking them to fight alongside American troops. Countless Filipino and American soldiers sacrificed their lives to protect the democratic principles they shared. It was estimated that 10,000 Filipino, soldiers and 1,200 American soldiers died as prisoners of war during the Bataan Death March alone.

Upon taking the pledge to serve, the Filipino, troops were promised the same benefits and pensions as their American brethren. They suffered the same torture and witnessed the same horrors. They shared the same patriotic duty to preserve liberty around the world. But in 1946 Congress passed the Recission Act, which revoked the full eligibility rights of Filipino soldiers and broke the commitment our nation made to, them.

As we stand together today acknowledging the contributions that the Filipino, soldiers sacrificed for our country, we must pledge to continue their fight for full recognition. This resolution is the first step in correcting the past. As Americans, we make a simple yet sacred promise to those who serve our country in uniform: 'You have taken care of us, so we will take care of you.'

Today, fewer than 70,000 Filipino, veterans are still alive. We remember World War II hero Magdaleno Duenas, a brave soldier who moved to my district in San Francisco and continued the fight from the battlefield to the frontlines in effort to ensure equity for Filipino veterans. We cannot forget the sacrifices that these veterans have made. We must dedicate ourselves as a nation to ensure that America fulfills its moral obligation to those who pay the high price for our freedom.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor those brave American and Filipino soldiers who fought side by side during the Pacific battles of World War II. Their heroic actions and courageous fortitude gave the Allied Forces the edge that they needed to emerge victorious in that great war.

American veterans like Donald Patafio of Woodcliff Lakes and Raymond DiPietro of Demarest. Patafio and DiPietro served in the Navy alongside these brave Filipino soldiers in the battle for their homeland. Patafio served honorably as an aviation radioman and DiPietro's unit received a Presidential Citation for their work in the battle.

More than 120,000 Filipino nationals were formed into U.S. divisions for the defense of their homeland and to advance the Allied forces' cause of liberty. Though poorly equipped, they fought valiantly under the American flag and under the direction of American military leaders in the weeks following the invasion of their homeland. Many continued the battle against the Japanese during the years of occupation.

Thousands of American and Filipino troops died during the infamous hundred-mile Bataan Death March. Many were executed along the way for merely asking for water in the scorching sun. While 70,000 forces surrendered, only 54,000 reached the internment camp. The Geneva Convention was no barrier to the mistreatment, torture, and indiscriminate execution inflicted upon these prisoners of war.

Civilian Filipinos suffered for their alliance with our American troops as well. In Manila, for instance, Japanese troops—in an indefensible position and cut off from supplies—took their anger out on an undefended civilian population, massacring more than 100,000.

We are grateful for the service of all the Filipino people—civilian, guerilla, and regular army—in the defense of democracy. And, we are thankful for their continued friendship. To this day, the Filipino people continue to welcome American soldiers, sailors, and airmen to bases that were instrumental in the Cold War and are now important in the War on Terror. As they did in World War II, fighting along side of brave American soldiers like Donald Patafio and Raymond DiPietro, the people of the Philippines continue to work with American forces to spread the cause of liberty.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of the Filipino veterans of WWII.

America owes a great debt of gratitude to these brave veterans, who risked life and limb

fighting off Japanese aggression in the War of the Pacific.

These brave soldiers, who were outmanned and outgunned, helped hold Japanese forces at bay for 2 years, preventing enemy victories in other parts of the Pacific theater.

Following the surrender of Allied forces on the island, Filipino veterans were subjected to some of the harshest treatment in WWII's recorded history.

This is perhaps best symbolized by the Bataan Death March, where over 10,000 veterans—both American and Filipino, side by side—gave the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

That is why I would like to thank my colleague, Representative DARYL ISSA, for offering H. Res. 622.

This important resolution, ''Reaffirms, recognizes, and honors the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of American democracy and important contribution to the victorious outcome of World War II.''

And while I proudly support Mr. ISSA's efforts here today, I must point out that there is much more work left to be accomplished in fully honoring and recognizing the sacrifices of our brave Filipino WWII veterans.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, as many of these veterans enter the sunset of their years, America has yet to fully extend health and survivor benefits to them and to their spouses.

Filipino veterans did not abandon America in her hour of need. Nor should we abandon them in theirs.

Congress must pass legislation to correct this inequity immediately. Several bills that more fully honor the sacrifices of these brave veterans, including, H.R. 302, the Filipino Equity Act, introduced by my colleague and fellow Californian BOB FILNER, are pending before this House.

H.R. 302 would restore all benefits promised to Filipino veterans. I call on the leadership of this House to bring H.R. 302 to the floor for a full vote before we adjourn this fall.

The words of this resolution are well deserved and welcomed by all who honor the sacrifices by Filipino veterans of WWII. But it is time we match our words with action.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I also have no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CONDEMNING THE REPRESSION OF THE IRANIAN BAHA'I COMMUNITY AND CALLING FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF IRANIAN BAHA'IS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H.Con. Res. 415) condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 415

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, and 2000, Congress, by concurrent resolution, declared that it deplores the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i Faith;

Whereas on March 20, 2006, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, revealed the existence of a confidential letter dated October 29, 2005, from the Chairman of the Command Headquarters of Iran's Armed Forces to the Ministry of Information, the Revolutionary Guard, and the Police Force, stating that the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, had instructed the Command Headquarters to identify members of the Baha'i Faith in Iran and monitor their activities;

Whereas the United Nations Special Rapporteur expressed ''grave concern and apprehension'' about the implications of this letter for the safety of the Baha'i community;

Whereas in 2005 the Iranian Government initiated a new wave of assaults, homes raids, harassment, and detentions against Baha'is, and in December 2005, Mr. Zabihullah Mahrami died after 10 years of imprisonment on charges of apostasy due to his membership in the Baha'i Faith; and

Whereas beginning in October 2005, an anti-Baha'i campaign has been conducted in the state-sponsored Kayhan newspaper and in broadcast media: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran for the October 29, 2005 letter, calls on the Government of Iran to immediately cease such activities and all activities aimed at the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community, and continues to hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding all the rights of its nationals, including members of the Baha'i community; and

(2) requests the President to—

(A) call for the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community by granting those rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants on human rights;

(B) emphasize that the United States regards the human rights practices of the Government of Iran, including its treatment of the Baha'i community and other religious minorities, as a significant factor in the foreign policy of the United States Government regarding Iran; and

(C) initiate an active and consistent dialogue with other governments and the European Union in order to persuade the Government of Iran to rectify its human rights practices.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 415, introduced by my colleague from Illinois, Mr. KIRK.

H. Con. Res. 415 condemns the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calls for their emancipation. This resolution notes the long-standing concern by Congress for the protection and status of religious minorities in Iran.

The resolution requests that the President call for the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community and guarantee them basic freedoms in accordance with international and human rights standards and obligations. It emphasizes that Iran's treatment of religious minorities and human rights practices are a significant consideration for the U.S. in formulating our policy toward the Iranian regime.

The Baha'i faith originated in Iran during the 19th century, and their community is one of the largest minorities in religion in Iran. The current government recognizes them as not in true keeping with the faith of the Iranian regime. They are not allowed to practice their faith, and they are further undermined by their inability to maintain contact with Baha'is living abroad.

Baha'is are discriminated against in nearly every sector of Iranian society. In October of 2005, the text of a secret Iranian Government document calling for the identity and monitoring of all Baha'is living in Iran became public. According to Human Rights Watch, Madam Speaker, the anti-Baha'i letter came amid a campaign in the state-run press that began 1 year ago.

Madam Speaker, I recommend that all interested parties who want to learn more about the plight of religious minorities in Iran read the recently released ''International Religious Freedom Report'' published by our Department of State. This report reaffirms the brutal and oppressive nature of the regime in Tehran. The persecution of the Iranian Baha'is is but one grim example in point.

Madam Speaker, as a cosponsor of this resolution, I strongly support the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 415, and I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. First, I would like to congratulate my good friend and colleague, Congressman MARK KIRK, for his leadership and strong voice in the defense of Baha'i communities all over the world. I am proud to be the original Democratic cosponsor of this important resolution.

The Baha'is are Iran's largest religious minority, but because the Baha'i faith is not one of the four religions recognized by the Iran Constitution, Baha'i do not have rights under Iranian law. Iranian courts have ruled that people who injure or kill Baha'is are not liable for damages because the Baha'is are ''unprotected infidels.'' The absurdity of the statement that they are ''unprotected infidels'' says a great deal about this regime.

Congress has long recognized the plight of this suffering community. Since 1982, we have passed eight resolutions condemning the treatment of the Baha'i in Iran. On March 28 of this year, the White House expressed concern for a worsening situation of the Baha'i in Iran and called on the Government of Iran to respect the religious freedom of its minorities.

Madam Speaker, the situation of the Baha'i in Iran has deteriorated dramatically over the past year with an increase in arbitrary arrests, raids on private homes and imprisonments, a defamation campaign in the government-sponsored press and the continued denial of access to higher education to young men and women of the Baha'i faith.

Iran must grant the Baha'i their full human rights, as this resolution makes crystal clear. Our resolution calls on the Government of Iran simply to grant Baha'i the rights guaranteed by international law. Iran, Madam Speaker, is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and several other human rights treaties, but it is obvious that Tehran has no more intention of observing the requirements of these agreements than it does the nuclear agreements it has signed.

The international community must not be mocked. It must hold Iran to those standards to which it has voluntarily committed itself. In fact, Iran's contempt for basic human rights standards knows no bounds. Earlier this year, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei ordered the Ministry of Information, the Revolutionary Guard and the police force to identify Baha'is and collect information on their activities. This is particularly worrisome in light of the Iranian Government's view of the Baha'is as non-persons.

The Anti-Defamation League has called this order ''reminiscent of the laws imposed on European Jews in the 1930s by Nazi Germany.'' Our resolution rightly highlights this order, which was revealed by the U.N. Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief.

Madam Speaker, the U.S. Congress needs to speak out strongly against these policies. We cannot stand by quietly as another pogrom against the Baha'is is quietly being prepared by the bigoted regime of Iran. We and the international community must put Iran on notice that such action is utterly intolerable.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the sponsor and author of this resolution.

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, which condemns the Government of Iran's repression of the Baha'i community. I would like to thank my very good friend, Congressman TOM LANTOS, for joining me as the Democratic cosponsor of this important human rights resolution.

The North American Baha'i Temple is located in Wilmette, Illinois, inside my congressional district. It is a magnificent house of worship, gracing Lake Michigan's shoreline.

The Baha'i faith, founded nearly 150 years ago on principles of peace and tolerance, is one of the fastest growing religions in the world. Yet since the Iranian revolution of 1979, the Government of Iran has intensified a deliberate campaign of discrimination, harassment, detention, arrest and imprisonment against the 300,000 members of the Iranian Baha'i community.

□ 1545

The plight of the Iranian Baha'is has significantly deteriorated during the last year. On March 20 of this year, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief revealed the existence of a confidential letter by the chairman of the Command Headquarters of Iran's armed services to Iran's intelligence services, military and police. In this letter, the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini instructed Command Headquarters to identify all Baha'is and collect any and all information on their activities and addresses.

Our Anti-Defamation League recently compared this secret letter to steps taken against the Jews in Europe in the 1930s, and yet the secret order has not happened in isolation.

Over the past 18 months, Iranian security forces have begun imprisoning Baha'is without charges, and Baha'i youth in Iran have been denied access to university.

Further, since October of 2005, there has been a campaign of vilification against Baha'is in Kayhan, the government-sponsored press.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom recently released in its 2006 annual report citing numerous egregious human rights violations committed by Iranian Government officials against Baha'is in Iran. The report says that, ''In the past year, dozens of Baha'is were arrested, detained, interrogated and subsequently released after, in some cases, weeks or months in detention. Charges typically ranged from 'causing anxiety in the minds of the public and of officials' or 'spreading propaganda against the regime.' ''

Clearly detentions based on claims of causing anxiety or spreading propaganda show a growing weakness in the Iranian regime.

That Congress is considering this resolution today is particularly significant. The Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will address the United Nations General Assembly today to call for all developing countries to join him in confronting the West. It is incumbent on Congress to reveal the real truth about this Iranian leader. We must demonstrate to the international community that while Iran's President has become a ruthless dictator who espouses hatred, discrimination and tyranny, the United States is standing for liberty and toleration and human rights and freedom, especially for Baha'is in Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I would like to thank our ranking member Congressman LANTOS for his friendship and support on this measure, a tireless advocate, a Holocaust survivor, a man who knows when the authorities call for the names and addresses of a particular minority what the next step is.

We have seen this before, and I want to particularly thank Chairman HYDE and Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN for their strong support, upon whom this resolution would not be coming to the floor on this crucial day in which the Iranian dictator speaks before the United Nations.

Finally, I would also like to thank Kit Bigelow and Aaron Emmel from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States for their dedication to their afflicted coreligionists inside Iran.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend from Illinois for his most gracious comments, and I am pleased to yield as much time as he might consume to our colleague and my good friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. LANTOS for his undying commitment to human rights. It was you and Mrs. Lantos who worked to see a Human Rights Caucus created, and you have kept these issues in front of the Congress, and I salute you for that.

I also salute my colleague Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her commitment to human rights. I think it is important that we always bring these issues before the House.

But I think it is also important to relate to Members of Congress the context in which this resolution is occurring and to look back over the last 4 years at a similar context.

The Baha'is in Iran certainly deserve to have a full according of their rights. As a matter of fact, this House has passed eight resolutions that condemns Iran for persecuting the Baha'i faith. At the same time, the House has not passed any resolutions condemning any other Nation for the persecution of the Baha'is.

The 2006 U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has identified three nations that persecute the Baha'i faith: Iran, Iraq and Egypt. I have quotes here that I would like to submit for the RECORD that establishes in each case, of Iran, Egypt and Iraq, the objections out of the 2006 annual report. This 2006 annual report also highlights concerns with the treatment of the Baha'i faith in China, Eritrea, Laos and Belarus.

I think it is important to note that the Baha'i faith is one which celebrates peace and human unity. That is why it is significant for us to always defend any religion which is trying to work for peace.

It is, therefore, paradoxical that this resolution is being offered at a time when some in the administration are on a path towards war against Iran.

I would like to submit for the RECORD a copy of the current issue from Time magazine which says: ''What Would War Look Like?'' We are talking about war with Iran, and it says, ''A flurry of military maneuvers in the Middle East increases speculation that conflict with Iran is no longer quite so unthinkable.'' This particular article out of Time magazine is very significant. The Navy has said that there is a submarine, a cruiser missile, mine sweepers and mine hunters that are prepared to deploy to the Persian Gulf. It is very serious. A naval blockade of Iran would be an act of war, and if we started with that, Iran would surely escalate.

There have been independent reports published in the New Yorker magazine and the Guardian that U.S. military personnel have been or are already deployed inside and around Iran gathering intelligence and targeting information, and there are reports published in Newsweek, ABC News and GQ magazine that the U.S. has been planning and is now recruiting members of MEK, a paramilitary group inside of Iran, to conduct lethal operations and destabilizing operations inside Iran. I submit articles from the New Yorker, from an antiwar.com Web site, from the Weekly Standard with regard to those facts.

Our Director of National Intelligence has said that Iran is a long way away from having a nuclear capability, 5 to 10 years, and that assumes that they are working around the clock, something that has not been proffered. We should keep in mind that last week, according to the Washington Post, the U.N. inspectors are disputing an Iran report by a House staff of the House Intelligence Committee which, according to the comment to the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency, was ''false, misleading and unsubstantiated.'' I have here a copy of the letter from the IAEA to the House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence with respect to misleading and false information that was included in a staff report that is being circulated around Congress, and I submit it for the RECORD.

I have a copy of a letter from myself to CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, he is the chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, which asks for an accounting by the Director of National Intelligence, who was supposed to be charged with the responsibility of reviewing this particular staff report before it reached publication. I submit this for the RECORD.

I have a copy of a Washington Post article which characterizes the U.N. inspectors' dispute with Iran or the U.N. inspector disputing the Iran report by the House panel.

Why am I submitting all this in the context of a resolution that has to do with standing up for the rights of the Baha'i to practice their faith? Because, once again, the Baha'i would not want this resolution to be used as part of a series of steps to encourage an attack on Iran. I can state that with certainty, knowing the Baha'i religion as I do, and yet we are seeing a series of steps, covert operations affecting Iran, preparation of bombing targets having already occurred, preparations for a naval blockade. I mean, this all points to the United States moving in a direction of attacking Iran. That is antithetical to the spirit of the Baha'i faith, which we are here today to stand up for.

There will be other resolutions that will relate to Iran which will be on the floor of the House this afternoon, and I expect to be speaking to those as well.

I want to say that, as the Speaker may be aware, it was 4 years ago I warned this House that the administration was taking steps to take this country to war against Iraq, and they had not made their case, and we actually went to war against Iraq based on false pretenses.

I am once again stating to the people of this Congress that we ought to be very careful about these series of initiatives which this administration is putting forth at this time so that we have to be aware that if they are making a case for war based on these resolutions, we should be very careful about what our intention is in passing these resolutions.

I want to thank the gentleman from California for the opportunity to point out these matters relevant to Iran.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 415, condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is.

I have long been an advocate of a free, independent, and democratic Iran; an Iran that does not destabilize the region, that does not threaten its neighbors, and that honors its commitments to the international community, especially on the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Since 1982, Congress has declared eight times that it deplores the religious persecution of the Baha'i community in Iran and that we hold the government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, especially members of the Baha'i faith. It is with dismay that I state that this persecution continues unabated and that the time has come for us as a nation of conscious to take action.

Since the Iranian revolution in 1979, the Iranian government has demonstrated its propensity to engage in systematic persecution and discrimination of the more than 300,000 Baha'is who live in Iran. Bahai's constitute Iran's largest religious minority and over the past quarter century, more than 200 Baha'is have been summarily executed or condemned to death. Thousands more have been imprisoned, detained, assaulted, and harassed.

On March 20, 2006, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief revealed the existence of a confidential letter dated October 29, 2005, from the Chairman of the Command Headquarters of Iran's Armed Forces stating that the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, had instructed the Command Headquarters to identify members of the Baha'i faith in Iran and to monitor their activities. The U.N. Special Rapporteur expressed ''grave concern and apprehension'' about the implications of this letter for the safety of the Iranian Baha'i community.

For years, I have been a supporter of the democratic movement in Iran, and today more than ever, the people of Iran need to be supported, empowered, and protected. In 2005, the Iranian government initiated a new wave of assaults, home raids, harassment and detentions of members of the Baha'i faith; 129 Baha'is are currently awaiting trial for, among other things, charges of ''creating anxiety in the minds of the public and those of the Iranian officials.'' I find this simply unacceptable and call on my colleagues to condemn this form of religious repression.

The only effective way to achieve lasting peace and prosperity in the region, along with effectuating reforms in Iran's polity, is assisting the Iranian people in general and members of the Baha'i faith in particular in their quest to achieve political, social, and religious liberty.

Every government can be judged with the way in which it treats its ethnic and religious minorities. The current Iranian government gets a failing grade for its treatment of the 300,000 Baha'i who live throughout the regions of Iran. I hold the government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of the Baha'i community and call on the government of Iran to cease repressive activities aimed at Iran's Baha'i. I consider the Iranian government's human rights record as a significant factor in our foreign policy towards Iran and call for President Bush and the leaders of nations around the world to demand that the government of Iran emancipate the Baha'i community by granting those rights guaranteed to them by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights covenants.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. We yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I also have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 415.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF IRANIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1906

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 942) recognizing the centennial anniversary on August 5, 2006, of the Iranian constitution of 1906.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 942

Whereas in 1906, one hundred years ago, the people of Iran rose in a peaceful democratic revolution against arbitrary, despotic rulers;

Whereas the people of Iran chose to confront these rulers with peaceful assemblies of thousands of people in the public spaces of Iran until these rulers received their demands;

Whereas these rulers bowed to the wishes of the people on August 5, 1906, and issued a decree for the convocation of a freely elected assembly, the Majles, to write a democratic constitution;

Whereas the Iranian constitution, written pursuant to the decree of 1906, was a democratic instrument providing for—

(1) the establishment of an independent judiciary;

(2) the establishment of an independent legislature with members directly elected by the people;

(3) socio-political progress, including the separation of religion from the affairs of government; and

(4) the commitment of the government to the territorial integrity of Iran;

Whereas the maneuvering of the imperial powers and a fundamentalist clergy crushed the democratic aspirations represented in the constitution of 1906;

Whereas the Iranian constitution of 1906 has nevertheless remained in the forefront of the aspirations of the Iranian people throughout decades of a long struggle towards progress, civil society, and democracy;

Whereas those ideals were abolished by the clerical-led dictatorship of the Ayatollahs in 1979; and

Whereas August 5, 2006, would be an appropriate day to recognize the centennial anniversary of the Iranian constitution of 1906: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the centennial anniversary of the Iranian constitution of 1906;

(2) is mindful of the democratic revolution of 1906 that lead to the drafting of the Iranian constitution; and

(3) expresses its profound hope that the people of Iran will once again enjoy a democratic government in the spirit of the Iranian constitution of 1906.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 942 introduced by my friend, my colleague Mr. KING from Iowa. H. Res. 942, Madam Speaker, recognizes the centennial anniversary on August 5 of the Iranian Constitution of 1906.

□ 1600

The resolution acknowledges the democratic revolution of the Iranian people going back 100 years. It notes the democratic political system created from this movement, with clearly defined separation of powers. Finally, the resolution expresses the hope that the people of Iran will be inspired by their democratic history and once again enjoy democratic rule.

You might be surprised to learn that Persia was the first country in the Middle East to introduce a constitution and create a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament and popular sovereignty in 1906. The then-Shah signed the electoral law and the fundamental law of Persia that established an independent legislature and an independent judiciary.

While the constitutionalist movement was temporarily undermined in 1908 during the reign of Mohammed Ali Shah Qajar, it was later rescued by the reign of his son.

The ideals of the constitutional revolution were abolished with the demise of the dynasty and the rise of an absolute monarchy in 1925, and then with the Iranian revolution in 1979.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is an opportunity for the American people to send a positive message to the Iranian people about their indigenous democratic tradition. We hope that this tradition will be an inspiration for the Iranian people as they seek to increase their political freedoms.

I strongly support the passage of this resolution. I thank Mr. KING for introducing it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I want to congratulate my friend and distinguished colleague from Iowa, Congressman KING, for introducing this important resolution commemorating Iran's democratic revolution of 1906. I want equally to congratulate my friend and committee colleague, Mr. BLUMENAUER, who introduced the resolution on the very same topic at virtually the same time.

The issues raised by the King and Blumenauer resolutions are both simple and complex. On the one hand, it is important simply that we commemorate the events of 1906, a popular uprising that led to the drafting of a constitution brimming with democratic guarantees.

Indeed, this was a heady time for tens of thousands of Iranian liberals, as the writings of the esteemed contemporary British scholar Edward G. Browne make abundantly clear.

Recalling these events reminds us that the yearning of the people of the Middle East for democracy has a long and storied history. In fact, there were other significant manifestations of democratic sentiment in the Middle East in the late 19th and early 20th centuries including both in Egypt and in the Ottoman Empire.

At the same time, we cannot help but acknowledge that the high hopes of the 1906 Constitutional Revolution were quickly dashed on the shoals of reactionary resistance, foreign interference, and the lack of unity among the constitutionalists. Iran has gone through many permutations since 1906, but it has experienced very little democracy.

Today's Iran is a far cry from that envisioned by the revolutionaries and constitution writers of a century ago. The Iran of today is an authoritarian, intolerant, theocratic regime in which ultimate authority rests with the clergy, and a minority of clergymen at that.

There are elections and there is a parliament in Iran, but candidates must first be approved by an unelected clergy. The democratic promise that Iranians set out for themselves in 1906 remains unfulfilled, but it is not forgotten. It stands as a beacon of democratic hope for Iran and for others throughout the Middle East.

At a time when we have committed our resources to supporting the emergence of a liberal, tolerant Middle East, it is very appropriate that we recall one of the earliest efforts in that region to establish a constitutional democratic regime. And we honor those Iranians who struggled for positive change. That is why I support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do likewise.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I am so pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman

from Iowa (Mr. KING), the prime sponsor and author of the resolution.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding and for her leadership on this important issue. And I also thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for his support for this resolution and for his leadership on many of these foreign relation issues that we have.

I am very pleased to be here on the floor today, Madam Speaker, to address this issue; and I rise in support of H. Res. 942 to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Iranian constitutional revolution.

The current totalitarian regime of the ayatollahs presents a threat to world peace. It is important to recognize that Iranian history contains within itself the evidence of internal representative constitutional aspirations which would free the Iranian people of oppressive tyranny.

In 1906, the people of Iran brought about a peaceful constitutional revolution to limit the autocratic power of a corrupt regime. As such, it was among the most significant turning points in Iranian history; it and resulted in the establishment of an elected parliament, the Majles, and the creation of a representative system of government, including checks and balances and the separation of powers.

While the constitution that was ultimately drafted as a result of the revolution was never fully implemented in Iran, it presents the Iranian people with an important starting point in their present-day struggle to overcome the tyranny of the ayatollahs.

Much like the situation that we currently see in Iran, before the revolution in 1906 Iran was ruled harshly by leaders who did not have to respond to the will of the people. As the people of Iran watched their leaders squander away their nation's land and resources, they were emboldened by the democratic revolutions that were at that time sweeping through Europe and Latin American. The people of Iran saw what was happening in other countries and demanded similar reforms. Just as today's Iranians see their needs overlooked in their leaders' attempts to hasten the coming of a worldwide radical Islamic state, the destruction of the assets of Iran before the 1906 revolution resulted in widespread poverty, food shortages and plague, though the rulers demonstrated no obligation to relieve the needs of the people.

After years of agitation and a number of failed attempts to bring about representative constitutional reforms in cooperation with Iran's rulers, the reformists chose nonviolent means to establish their demands. Early in 1906, some 16,000 Iranians gathered in the mosques and the public places of Tehran, organized camps, commissaries, and sanitation facilities and established order; and they simply stayed there. In modern terms, it was a giant sit-in that lasted for weeks. And on August 5, 1906, Mozafareddin Shah signed a decree authorizing the creation of a freely elected Majles which was the first task of writing a permanent constitution. The constitution that was created was a modern representative document created upon the model of the Belgian Constitution that met all the requirements of the four demands of the revolutionary democratic movement.

The establishment of an independent judiciary was one. The second was establishment of an independent legislature, with members directly elected by the people. The third was a socio-political progress, including the separation of religion from the affairs of government. I will repeat, the separation of religion. The fourth was a commitment of the government to the territorial integrity of Iran. And in 1907, in one of the most unfortunate events of the Iranian history, Mozafareddin Shah died, and with him died the full implementation of the representative constitution.

Nevertheless, the 1906 constitution has always served as a beacon of liberty for those striving for freedom in Iran. All people on the face of the Earth ought to have the right to live under a constitutionally prescribed government that is representative and responsive to the will of the people. The 1906 Constitution of Iran provides the people of Iran with a blueprint for constitutional government that is a product of their culture and their needs. It has demonstrated that Iranians could come together, using their own resources and their own traditions, to create a liberal representative constitutional state. And even though a corrupt dictatorial reactionary regime has ruled in Iran since 1979, the 1906 Iranian Constitution inspires hope for a free Iran today.

Madam Speaker, I hope the recognition contained in this bill can help inspire Iranians to rise up and expel their country's dictators. Given the current threat the Iranian regime poses to global security today, the whole world should join in supporting and encouraging the Iranian people's fight for freedom and constitutional representation.

I ask my colleagues for support of this important legislation and pray for the day that all of God's children live in freedom and liberty.

DRAFT 1906 IRAN CONSTITUTION

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Forgiving.

WHEREAS in accordance with the Imperial edict dated the fourteenth of Jumada althani, A.H. 1324 (=August 5, 1906), a decree was issued for the establishment of a National Consultative Assembly, to promote the progress and happiness of our Kingdom and people, strengthen the foundations of our Government and give effect to the enactments of the Sacred Law of His Holiness the Prophet,

AND WHEREAS, by virtue of the fundamental principle (therein laid down), we have conferred on each individual of the people of our realm, for the amending and superintending of the affairs of the commonwealth, according to their degrees, the right to participate in choosing and appointing the Members of this Assembly by popular election,

THEREFORE the National Consultative Assembly is now opened, in accordance with our Sacred Command; and we do define as follows the principles and articles of the Constitutional Law regulating the aforesaid National Consultative Assembly, which Law comprises the duties and functions of the above-mentioned Assembly, its limitations, and its relations with the various ministries of the country.

On the Constitution of the Assembly.

Article 1—The national consultative assembly is founded and established in accordance with the Imperial edict of the fourteenth of the Jumada al-thani, A.H. 1324 (August 5, 1906).

Article 2—The National Consultative Assembly represents the whole of the people of Iran, who (thus) participate in the economic and political affairs of the country.

Article 3—The National Consultative Assembly shall consist of the members elected in Tehran and the provinces, and shall be held in Tehran.

Article 4—The number of elected members of the national consultative assembly has been fixed, in accordance with the electoral law, separately promulgated, at one hundred and sixty-two, but in case of necessity the number of the members may be increased to two hundred.

Article 5—The members of the national consultative assembly shall be elected for two whole years. This period shall begin on the day when all the representatives from the provinces have arrived in Tehran. On the conclusion of this period or two years, new representatives shall be elected, but the people shall have the option of re-electing any of their former representatives whom they wish and with whom they are satisfied.

Article 6—The members of the national consultative assembly who have been elected to represent Tehran shall, as soon as they meet, have the right to convene the national consultative assembly and to begin their discussions and deliberations. During the period preceding the arrival of the provincial delegates, their decisions shall depend for their validity and due execution on the majority (by which they are carried).

Article 7—On the opening of the debates, at least two thirds of the members of the national consultative assembly shall be present, and, when the vote is taken at least three quarters. A majority shall be obtained only when more than half of those present in the Assembly record their votes.

Article 8—The periods of session and recess of the national consultative assembly shall be determined by the assembly itself, in accordance with such internal regulations as itself shall formulate. After the summer recess, the national consultative assembly must continue open and remain in session from the fourteenth day of the month of Mehr (Oct. 6th), which corresponds with the anniversary of the opening day of the first assembly.

Article 9—The national consultative assembly can sit on occasions of extraordinary public holidays.

Article 10—On the opening day of the national consultative assembly, an address shall be presented by it to His Imperial Majesty, and it shall afterwards have the honor of receiving an answer from that Royal and August quarter.

Article 11—Members of the national consultative assembly, on taking their seats, shall take and subscribe to the following form of oath:

(Form of the Oath.)

''We the undersigned take God to witness, and swear on the Qur'an, that, so long as the rights of the national consultative assembly

and its members are observed and respected, in conformity with these regulations, we will, so far as possible, discharge, with the utmost truth, uprightness, diligence and endeavor, the duties confided to us; that we will act loyally and truthfully towards our just and honored sovereign, commit no treason in respect of either the foundations of the throne or the rights of the people, and will consider only the advantage and well-being of the people and the country of Iran.''

Article 12—No one, on any pretext or excuse, shall have any right, without the knowledge and approval of the national consultative assembly, to molest its members. Even in case of the members committing some crime or misdemeanor, and being arrested flagrante delicto, any punishment inflicted upon him must be with the cognizance of the national consultative assembly.

Article 13—The deliberations of the national consultative assembly, in order that effect may be given to their results, must be public. According to the internal regulations of the assembly, journalists and spectators have the right to be present and listen, but not to speak. Newspapers may print and publish all the debates of the assembly, provided they do not change or pervert their meaning, so that the public may be informed of the subjects of discussion and the detail of what takes place. Everyone, subject to his playing due regard to the public good, may discuss them in the public press, so that no matter may be veiled or hidden from any person. Therefore all newspapers, provided that their contents are not injurious to any one of the fundamental principles of the government or the nation, are authorized and allowed to print and publish all matters advantageous to the public interest, such as the debates of the assembly, and the opinions of the people on these debates. But if anyone, actuated by interested motives, shall print in the newspapers or in other publications anything contrary to what has been mentioned, or inspired by slander or calumny, he will render himself liable to cross-examination, judgment and punishment, according to law.

Article 14—The national consultative assembly shall organize and arrange, in accordance with separate and distinct regulations called the Internal Code of Rules, its own affairs, such as the election of a president, vice-presidents, secretaries, and other officers, the arrangements of the debates and formation of committees, etc.

Duties of the Assembly, its Rights and its Limitations.

Article 15—The national consultative assembly has the right in all matters and issues to propose any bill which it regards as conducive to the well-being of the government and the people, after due discussion and deliberation thereof in all sincerity and truth; and, having due regard to the majority of votes, to submit such bill, in complete confidence of safety and security, after it has received the approval of the senate, by means of the Prime Minister of the country, so that it may receive the Royal Approval and be duly carried out.

Article 16—All laws necessary to strengthen the foundations of the country and throne and to set in order the affairs of the realm and the establishment of the ministries must be ratified by the national consultative assembly.

Article 17—The national consultative assembly shall, when occasion arises, bring forward such bills as shall be necessary for the creation, modification, completion or abrogation of any law, and, subject to the ratification by the senate, shall submit it for the royal sanction, so that due effect may thereafter be given to it.

Article 18—The regulation of all financial matters, the construction and regulation of the budget, all changes in fiscal arrangements, the acceptance or rejection of all incidental and subordinate expenditure, as also the new inspectorships (of finance) which will be founded by the Government, shall be subject to the approval of the national consultative assembly.

Article 19—The national consultative assembly has the right, after the senate has given its approval, to demand from the ministers that effect shall be given to the bills thus approved for the reform of the finances and the facilitation of co-operation between the different departments of the Government by division of the departments and provinces of Iran and their respective offices.

Article 20—The budget of each ministry shall be concluded during the latter half of each year for the following year, and shall be ready fifteen days before the festivities of Norooz. (March 21, the Iranian new year)

Article 21—Should it at any time be necessary to introduce, modify or abrogate any bylaws regulating the (functions of the) ministries, such change shall be made only with the approval of the national consultative assembly, irrespective of whether the necessity for such action has been declared by the assembly or enunciated by the responsible ministers.

Article 22—Any proposal to transfer or sell any portion of the national resources, or of the control exercised by the government or the throne, or to effect any change in the boundaries and frontiers of the kingdom, shall be subject to the approval of the national consultative assembly.

Article 23—Without the approval of the national consultative assembly no concession for the formation of any public company of any sort shall, under any plea whatsoever be granted by the government.

Article 24—The conclusion of treaties and covenants, the granting of commercial, industrial, agricultural and other concessions, irrespective of whether they are granted to Iranian or foreign nationals, shall be subject to the approval of the national consultative assembly, with the exception of treaties which, for reasons of state and the public advantage, must be kept secret.

Article 25—All government and national loans, under whatever title, whether internal or external, must be contracted only with the cognizance and approval of the national consultative assembly.

Article 26—The construction of railroads or chausses, at the expense of the government, or of any company, whether Iranian or foreign, depends on the approval of the assembly.

Article 27—Wherever the assembly observes any defect in the laws, or any neglect in giving effect to them, it shall notify the same to the minister responsible for that department, who shall furnish all necessary explanations.

Article 28—Should any minister, acting under misapprehension, issue on the royal authority, whether in writing or verbal, orders conflicting with one of the laws which have been enacted and have received the royal sanction, he shall admit his negligence and lack of attention, and shall, according to the law, be personally responsible to His Majesty.

Article 29—Should a minister fail to give a satisfactory account of any affair conformable to the laws which have received the royal sanction, and should it appear in his case that a violation of such law has been committed, or that he has transgressed the limits imposed (on him), the assembly shall demand his dismissal from His Majesty, and should his treason be clearly established in a Court of Law, he shall not again be employed in the service of the State.

Article 30—The Assembly shall, at any time when it considers it necessary, have the right to make direct representations to His Majesty by means of a committee consisting of the president of the national consultative assembly and six of its members chosen by the six ranks. This committee must ask permission, and make an appointment for an audience with His Majesty through the Chief of Protocol. (Wazir-i-Darbar).

Article 31—Ministers have the right to be present at the sessions of the national consultative assembly, to sit in the places appointed for them, and to listen to the debates of the assembly. If they consider it necessary, they may ask the President of the assembly for permission to speak, and may give such explanations as may be necessary for purposes of discussion and investigation.

On the Presentation of Issues to the National Consultative Assembly.

Article 32—Any individual may submit in writing to the Petition Department of the Archives of the assembly a statement of his own case, or of any criticisms or complains. If the matter concerns the assembly itself, it will give him a satisfactory answer; but if it concerns one of the ministries, it will refer it to that ministry, which will enquire into the matter and return a sufficient answer.

Article 33—New laws which are needed shall be drafted and revised in the ministries which are respectively responsible, and shall then be laid before the national consultative assembly by the responsible ministers, or by the Prime Minister. After being ratified by the assembly, and signed by His Majesty, they shall be duly put into force.

Article 34—The President of the national consultative assembly can, in case of necessity, either personally, or on the demand often members of the assembly, hold a private conference, consisting of a selected number of members of the national consultative assembly, with any minister, from which private meeting newspaper correspondents and spectators shall be excluded, and at which other members of the assembly shall not have the right to be present. The result of the deliberations of such secret conference shall, however, only be confirmed when it has been deliberated in the said conference in presence of three quarter those selected (to serve on it), and carried by a majority of votes. Should the proposition (in question) not be accepted in the private conference, it shall not be brought forward in the national consultative assembly, but shall be passed over in silence.

Article 35—If such private conference shall have been held at the demand of the president of the national consultative assembly, he has the right to inform the public of so much of the deliberations as he shall deem expedient; but if the private conference has been held at the demand of a minister, the disclosure of the deliberations depends on the permission of that minister.

Article 36—Any minister can withdraw any matter which he has proposed to the assembly at any point in the discussion, unless his statement has been made at the instance of the assembly, in which case statement has been made at the instance of the assembly, in which case the withdrawal of the matter depends on the consent of the assembly.

Article 37—If a bill introduced by any minister is not accepted by the national consultative assembly, it shall be returned, supplemented by the observations of the assembly; and the responsible minister, after rejecting or accepting the criticisms of the assembly, can propose the aforesaid bill a second time to the assembly.

Article 38—The members of the national consultative assembly must clearly and plainly signify their rejection or acceptance of bills, and no one has the right to persuade or threaten them in recording their votes. The signification by the members of the assembly of such rejection or acceptance

must be effected in such manner that newspaper correspondents and spectators also may perceive it, that is to say their intention must be signified by some outward sign such as (the employment of) blue and white voting-papers, or the like.

On the Introduction of Bills and Other Proposals by the Assembly.

Article 39—Whenever any bill is proposed by one of the members of the assembly, it can only be discussed when at least fifteen members of the assembly shall approve the discussion on that bill. In such case the proposal in question shall be forwarded in writing to the President of the assembly, who has the right to arrange that it shall be subjected to a preliminary investigation in a Committee of Enquiry.

Article 40—On the occasion of the discussion and investigation of such bill as is mentioned in Article 39, whether in the assembly or in the Committee of Enquiry, notice shall be given by the assembly to the responsible minister, if any, concerning that bill, that if possible he himself, or, if not, his deputy, shall be present in the assembly, so that the debate may take place in the presence of one or other of them. The draft of the (proposed) bill, with its additions, must be sent from ten days to a month before the time (with the exception of matters added at the last moment) to the responsible minister; and so likewise the day of its discussion must be determined beforehand. After the bill has been discussed in the presence of the responsible minister, and in case it should, by a majority of votes, receive the approval of the assembly, it shall be officially transmitted in writing to the responsible minister, so that he may take the necessary actions to implement it.

Article 41—If the responsible minister cannot, for any reason, agree with the national consultative assembly about the said bill, he must offer his excuses to it and give it satisfaction.

Article 42—Should the national consultative assembly demand explanations on any matter from the responsible minister, the minister in question must give an answer, which answer must not be postponed unnecessarily or without plausible reason, save in the case of secret matters, the secrecy of which for some definite period is to the advantage of the country and the people. In such cases, on the lapse of the definite period the responsible minister is bound to disclose that matter in the assembly.

On the Conditions Regulating the Formation of the Senate.

Article 43—There shall be constituted another assembly, entitled the Senate, consisting of sixty members, the sessions of which, after its constitution, shall be contemporaneous to the sessions of the national consultative assembly.

Article 44—The regulations of the Senate must be approved by the national consultative assembly.

Article 45—The members of this assembly shall be chosen from amongst the well-informed, discerning, pious and respected persons of the realm. Thirty of them shall be nominated by His Imperial Majesty (fifteen of the people of Tehran, and fifteen of the people of the provinces), and thirty shall be elected by the people (fifteen elected by the people of Tehran, and fifteen elected by the people of the provinces).

Article 46—After the convocation of the Senate, all proposals must be approved by both assemblies. If those proposals shall have been originated in the Senate, or by the cabinet of ministers, they must first be amended and corrected in the Senate and accepted by a majority of votes, and must then be approved by the national consultative assembly. But proposals brought forward by the national consultative assembly must, on the contrary, go from this assembly to the Senate, except in the case of financial matters, which belong exclusively to the national consultative assembly. The decision of the assembly, in respect to the above-mentioned proposals, shall be made known to the Senate, so that it in turn may communicate its observations to the national consultative assembly, but the latter, after due discussion, is free to accept or reject these observations of the Senate.

Article 47—So long as the Senate has not been convoked, proposals shall, after being approved by the national consultative assembly, receive the Royal assent, shall then have the force of law.

Article 48—If any proposal, after undergoing debate and revision in the Senate, be referred by a minister to the national consultative assembly, and be not accepted, such disputed proposal shall, in case of its being of importance, be reconsidered by a third assembly composed of members of the Senate and members of the national consultative assembly elected in equal moieties by members of the two assemblies. The decision of this (third) assembly shall be read out in the national consultative assembly. If it be then accepted, well. If not, a full account of the matter shall be submitted to His Majesty and should the Royal judgment support the view of the national consultative assembly, it shall become effective; but if not, orders will be issued for a fresh discussion and investigation. If again no agreement of opinion results, and the Senate, by a majority of two thirds, approves the dissolution of the national consultative assembly, this approval being separately affirmed by the cabinet of ministers, then the Imperial decree will be issued for the dissolution of the national consultative assembly, and at the same time orders shall be given for the holding of fresh elections, the people, however, have the right to re-elect their former representatives.

Article 49—The new representatives of Tehran must present themselves within the space of one month, and the representatives of the provinces within the space of three months. When the representatives of the Capital are present, the Assembly shall be opened, and shall begin its labors, but they shall not discuss disputed proposals until the provincial representatives shall arrive. If, after the arrival of all its members, the new assembly shall by a clear majority confirm the first decision, His Most Sacred and Imperial Majesty shall approve that decision of the national consultative assembly, and shall order it to be carried into effect.

Article 50—In each electoral period, which consists of two years, orders for the renewal of representatives shall not be given more than once.

Article 51—It is agreed that the kings of our successors and posterity shall regard as a duty of their sovereign state and an obligation incumbent upon them the maintenance of these laws and principles, which we have established and put into force for the strengthening of the edifice of the country, the consolidation of the foundations of the Throne, the superintendence of the machinery of Justice, and the tranquility of the nation.

14 of the month of Dhu'l-Qa'da, in the year of 1324 A.H.

(=December 30, 1906).

''These constitutional laws of the national consultative assembly and the senate, containing fifty-one articles, are correct.

(Dhu al-Qi'dah 14, A.H. 1324''

(=December 30, 1906).

(Underneath the concluding words is the signature of the Muzaffaru'd-Din Shah, and on the back of the page are the seals of the then Crown Prince or Wali-'ahd (the deposed Shah, Muhammad'Ali), and of the late Mushiru'd-Dawla.)

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield to my good friend and distinguished colleague from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) as much time as he might consume.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank the gentleman from California, and I appreciate your commitment to constitutional democracies. My statement here today, while I can certainly agree with the sentiment that was expressed and the spirit of this resolution with respect to hoping for constitutional democracies, I think we need to look at the letter of the resolution and put it in the context of the administration's policies.

First of all, this particular resolution expresses its profound hope that the people of Iran will once again enjoy a democratic government in the spirit of the Iranian Constitution of 1906. I would like to read from some research that is available on the Web, Recent Iranian History from Wikipedia. It says that: with the rise of modernization in the late 19th century, desire for change led to the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905 to 1911. In 1921, Reza Shah Pahlavi staged a coup against the weakened Qajar dynasty.

During World War II, Britain and the USSR invaded Iran from August 25 to September 17, 1941, to stop an axis-supported coup and secure Iran's petroleum infrastructure. The allies of World War II forced the Shah to abdicate, in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, whom they hoped would be more supportive.

In 1951, a pro-democratic nationalist, Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, rose to prominence in Iran. Now, Mossadegh was elected its first Prime Minister. As Prime Minister, Mossadegh alarmed the West by his nationalization of an Anglo-Iranian oil company that was later named BP, which controlled all the country's oil reserves.

Britain immediately put an embargo on Iran. Members of British Intelligence Service approached the United States under President Eisenhower in 1953 to join them in Operation Ajax, a coup against Mossadegh. President Eisenhower agreed and authorized the CIA to assist the BIS in overthrowing Mossadegh. The Shah at first attempted to formally dismiss Mossadegh, but this backfired and Mossadegh convinced the Shah to flee to Baghdad.

Regardless of this setback, the covert operation soon went into full swing conducted from the U.S. embassy in Tehran under the leadership of Kermit Roosevelt, Jr. Agents were hired to facilitate violence, and as a result protests broke out across the nation, anti- and pro-monarchy. Protesters violently clashed in the streets leaving almost 300 dead. The operation was successful in triggering a coup, and within days pro-Shah tanks stormed the capital and bombarded the Prime Minister's

residence. Mossadegh surrendered and was arrested on the 19th of August 1953, tried for treason, and sentenced to 3 years in prison.

□ 1615

Now, keep in mind that on March 8 of 1951, Mossadegh submitted to the Iranian mullahs his proposal to nationalize Iran's oil. According to the Cornell University library, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, most of whose stock was owned by the British Government, had been paying Iran much less than the British Government took from the company in taxes. Mossadegh's nationalization bill scared the company into concessions that were made too late. The Premier was committed to nationalization. Much to the surprise of the British, he went through with it right down to the expulsion of British technicians without whom the Iranians could not run the Abadan refinery. Results? The West lost the Iranian oil supply, and the Iranian Government lost the oil payments.

When we are talking about democracy in Iran, Iran had a democratic government which was overthrown because of oil. So let's celebrate democracy and not try to at the same time praise a process that resulted in an overthrow of democracy.

I think when we look at this particular resolution, you have to read these resolutions to the letter to get an idea of what is going on here.

Here we are expressing the profound hope that the people of Iran will once again enjoy a democratic government in the spirit of the Iranian Constitution of 1906. They had a democratic government. The U.S. helped overthrow it.

One of the last resolutions, we talked about initiating an active and consistent dialogue with other governments in the European Union in order to persuade the Government of Iran to rectify its human rights practices. We should be talking to the Government of Iran if we object to their human rights practices.

Resolution 415 says human rights will be considered a significant factor in the foreign policy of the United States with regard to Iran, but we are not stating that with the other countries that have violated the human rights of their citizens.

My concern is that while these resolutions in and of themselves may have elements that are salutary, at the same time you have to put them in the context of the administration's policy, which is a buildup to war against Iran. That is why I am raising a note of caution here. You have to see why we have three resolutions on the floor of the House dealing with Iran on the same day our President is before the United Nations making a statement which characterizes Iran in much the same way that Iraq was characterized before the United Nations in another visit by the President. I think we have to be very cautious about the path this country is taking.

We can stand for democracy and human rights in Iran. We can do all of those things without taking steps and letting our efforts, which might be in good faith, by the way, without letting those efforts be used as a buildup towards war. I am saying look at all of this in the context in which it is occurring.

Look at Time magazine this week and look at the stories that have been published in The New Yorker. Watch the development of this administration with respect to covert activities in Iran.

Madam Speaker, you might be interested to know that our House Subcommittee on Government Operations, which has jurisdiction over national security and international relations, we were supposed to have a classified briefing by the State Department and by the Department of Defense on this issue on what is going on in Iran. They refused to appear. They still refuse to appear. They are not accountable to Congress. I am raising this issue so my colleagues know that you have to look at the context in which these resolutions are being offered.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for the opportunity to present these observations.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 942, recognizing the centennial anniversary on August 5, 2006, of the Iranian constitution of 1906. I, too, introduced are solution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution at the same time as Mr. KING, H. Res. 967.

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution was a pivotal event in Persian and Middle Eastern history. In the face of a corrupt and authoritarian Qajar monarchy, and in order to defend Persian interests against British and Russian imperialism, the Persian people rose up and forced the creation of a parliament and the adoption of a constitution containing basic democratic rights for the first time in Iranian history.

In this time that the United States faces very serious and difficult issues with regards to Iran, this historic event demonstrates that the Iranian people's long-standing desire for democratic self-government, free from authoritarian rule or foreign interference. I believe that understanding these values common to the Iranian and American peoples, as well as Iran's political history, will help us develop a constructive policy towards Iran. It is also an important sign of support for the Iranian people and our Iranian-American constituents.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, we have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I also have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 942.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM NEEDS TO DO MORE TO RESOLVE CLAIMS FOR CONFISCATED REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 415) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam needs to do more to resolve claims for confiscated real and personal property, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 415

Whereas during the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a 1-party state ruled and controlled by the Vietnamese Communist Party, uncompensated confiscation of real and personal property from Vietnamese citizens was a widespread occurrence;

Whereas Article 23 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam provides that ''[t]he lawful property of individuals and organizations shall not be nationalized'';

Whereas according to the Department of State, more work is necessary to adequately protect property rights in Vietnam; and

Whereas the people of the United States are firmly committed to freedom, democracy, and basic human rights for the citizens of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) The House of Representatives—

(A) welcomes recent attempts by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to establish private land use rights for its citizens, and hopes that these rights are quickly expanded to encompass all Vietnamese citizens;

(B) calls on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to more fully recognize its responsibility to provide equitable, prompt, and fair restitution of property that was confiscated by the government;

(C) calls on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to direct local officials, particularly in the Central Highlands region, to promptly investigate and resolve complaints about discriminatory and uncompensated confiscation of land;

(D) urges the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to form a national commission for processing restitution claims, and to obligate local government officials, bodies, and agencies to provide all necessary documentation and cooperation to facilitate the implementation of decisions issued by the national commission; and

(E) strongly urges the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam—

(i) to ensure that implementation of land use reforms by local officials does not result in increased inequity in access to land, particularly for the poor and for those out of favor with the Communist Party; and

(ii) to ensure that the government provides fair, prompt, and equitable restitution to former landowners for the property rights of all confiscated lands; and

(2) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(A) the President should specifically consider land use rights for individuals in determining whether the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a country of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402(b)(1)(A) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)(A)); and

(B) the President should direct the Secretary of State to include, in the Secretary of State's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices submitted to the Congress under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the status of land use rights and restitution claims in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 415 expresses the sense of the House that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam needs to do more to resolve claims for confiscated real and personal property. This resolution notes the widespread confiscation of real and personal property that occurred during the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a one-party state ruled by the Vietnamese Communist Party.

Many individuals and entities, including the Catholic Church and the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam, still have not been adequately compensated for those extensive takings.

Unfortunately, property confiscation is not just a thing of the past. Earlier this year, the State Department noted reports that Vietnamese officials had forced some ethnic minority Protestants to leave their homes without adequate compensation, and that land was seized from other minorities and given to state-owned coffee and rubber plantations. These events underscore the continuing need for equitable restitution and better protection of property rights in Vietnam.

House Resolution 415 urges the Vietnamese Government to investigate confiscation complaints and to provide restitution. It also expresses the sense of the House that our President should consider land rights issues in determining whether Vietnam is a country of particular concern for religious freedom under the International Religious Freedom Act, and should include reporting on land rights and restitution issues in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.

We appreciate the efforts of this resolution's lead sponsors, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), and we thank Chairman HYDE and the Committee on International Relations for moving this resolution forward.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of this resolution.

I first want to commend my good friend and fellow Californian Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ for introducing this resolution. Her leadership in Congress on matters related to Vietnam is deeply appreciated.

Since the fall of Saigon more than three decades ago, the Vietnamese Government has confiscated private property of thousands of Vietnamese families. Some of these Vietnamese have fled abroad, while others have continued to live under the repression of the Vietnamese Communist Party.

Sadly, the confiscation of private property by the Vietnamese Government is not a matter of ancient history. Many Vietnamese today complain that local authorities are confiscating their lands without compensation and due process, and that these confiscations are being carried out in a singularly discriminatory fashion.

The Montagnards in Vietnam's Central Highlands, many of whom are Christians, have been particularly subjected to land confiscations. Many Christian Montagnards have lost access to their ancestral lands, and they have been severely marginalized in an economic sense. In some cases, confiscated Montagnard land has been turned over to Vietnamese from lowland areas.

Madam Speaker, the Vietnamese Government has recently made efforts to improve its land reform policies. It is imperative that the government uses this process to end discriminatory land seizures and to ensure that everyone receives adequate compensation for their property.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the author of this important resolution, my good friend from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ).

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. LANTOS for yielding me this time.

I would also like to thank my original cosponsor, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), and Chairman HYDE, and all of the members of the Committee on International Relations who thought this was an important resolution and who helped me bring it to the floor.

I introduced H. Res. 415 in June 2005 because we began to see a very big pattern of confiscation of land. Now, this had been happening in Vietnam since the fall of Saigon back in 1975 by the Socialist government. But we have seen it happen even more, and particularly to religious institutions and to minorities, including the Montagnards who live up in the highlands.

It is a growing concern, and illegal seizures of personal property from Vietnamese citizens and private organizations just shouldn't be happening. Even though Article 23 of the Vietnamese Constitution prohibits seizure of property without compensation, this has not been enforced.

We must support the people within Vietnam who continue to fight for the right to keep their land. Believe me, they do. They have been demonstrating now for almost 6 months in front of the government buildings in Hanoi asking for land reform, asking to get their lands back. We need to make sure if their lands are taken and they are not gotten back, they should at least be compensated correctly for having them taken from them.

The government claims it is working to improve its human rights record. Well, this Congress can send a clear message that we are looking at what they are doing, and in order to show progress in the area of human rights, we are going to evaluate it step by step, and the first part is to end property seizures and to fairly compensate the citizens and organizations whose land has been unfairly taken.

Congress must be clear with the Government of Vietnam that promises alone are not satisfactory, and that implementation and enforcement are the real measures of this progress. As the President prepares to go to Vietnam, and as Vietnam is looking at entrance into WTO, and as we are looking at normal trade relations with Vietnam, I think it is incredibly important for this Congress to remember how important human rights are here in the United States and for every citizen of the world.

I urge my colleagues to support the people of Vietnam and to send a clear message to the Government of Vietnam by voting for this resolution today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the effort, the legislation and the work of Congresswoman SANCHEZ, who has worked on these issues for a very long time. I also thank the ranking member Mr. LANTOS and the manager Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for their leadership on these issues.

It is interesting that now, with most of the world's leaders at the United Nations, you would almost hope that they would accomplish something. Certainly that would mean to many of the nations that would be appearing there

that they would address some of the questions that have oppressed their citizens for years.

□ 1630

After the Vietnam War, we remain with a divided Vietnam, the North and South Vietnam; but over the years, this Congress and these administrations have moved more closely to try to develop alliances with the United States and North and South Vietnam, under the argument that engagement is responsible and it helps to promote democracy.

I would say that many of the Vietnamese in the Vietnamese community of the United States know that that is still a difficult road. Many are still fighting for family reunification, for the right to visit their families, or the right for their families to be reunited with them. Even though we move closer and closer to trade relationships, we still have harsh conditions in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and that has to do with the ongoing fight for confiscated and personal property that has not been returned.

Unfortunately, as the one-party system was established under the Vietnamese Communist Party, uncompensated confiscation of real and personal property from Vietnamese citizens was widespread and there was no solution. Unfortunately, under this government the confiscation of land as a tool of repression against certain ethnic minorities continued, and it continues even today. Article 23 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam provides that the lawful property of individuals and organizations shall not be nationalized.

So I rise today to ask that more attention be given to the providing of this property back to the rightful owners and that the government is asked by the world community to establish a private land use right for some of its citizens and also to establish a way to return this property. We, likewise, believe that this government should remove itself from engaging in repressive procedures that do not allow the right of private property ownership to exist in North Vietnam. We believe it is very important for tools to be put in place so that the rights of the people can be restored.

I hope in this time that the United Nations is gathered that issues dealing with individual rights of citizens and countries that are still repressive become high on their agenda. We need to discuss Sudan. We need to discuss the rights of the people in Iran, and, certainly, Vietnam is one in particular.

So I join in support of H. Res. 415 and ask this Congress to support a strong statement being made to North Vietnam about the rights of its people and the right for the return of private and personal property. This is a time that the statement should be made, but more importantly, this is a time for action.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 415, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION CALLING FOR OBSERVANCE OF GLOBAL FAMILY DAY, ONE DAY OF PEACE AND SHARING

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Con. Res. 317) requesting the President to issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 317

Whereas, in the year 2005, the people of the world suffered many calamitous events, including devastation from tsunami, terror attacks, war, famine, genocide, hurricanes, earthquakes, political and religious conflict, disease, poverty, and rioting, all necessitating global cooperation, compassion, and unity previously unprecedented among diverse cultures, faiths, and economic classes;

Whereas grave global challenges in the year 2006 may require cooperation and innovative problem-solving among citizens and nations on an even greater scale;

Whereas, on December 15, 2000, Congress adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution 138, expressing the sense of Congress that the President of the United States should issue a proclamation each year calling upon the people of the United States and interested organizations to observe an international day of peace and sharing at the beginning of each year;

Whereas, in 2001, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 56/2, which invited ''Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and all the peoples of the world to celebrate One Day in Peace, 1 January 2002, and every year thereafter'';

Whereas many foreign heads of state have recognized the importance of establishing Global Family Day, a special day of international unity, peace, and sharing, on the first day of each year; and

Whereas family is the basic structure of humanity, thus, we must all look to the stability and love within our individual families to create stability in the global community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress urgently requests the following:

(1) That the President issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, a day which is dedicated—

(A) to eradicating violence, hunger, poverty, and suffering; and

(B) to establishing greater trust and fellowship among peace-loving nations and families everywhere.

(2) That the President invite former Presidents of the United States, Nobel laureates, and other notables, including American business, labor, faith, and civic leaders, to join the President in promoting appropriate activities for Americans and in extending appropriate greetings from the families of America to families in the rest of the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration and to include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Con. Res. 317, requesting the President to issue a proclamation setting aside a day dedicated to eradicating violence and establishing greater trust among peace-loving nations and families everywhere.

This resolution has a distinguished history, Madam Speaker. In the year 2000, Congress unanimously agreed to a similar resolution. The previous legislation, authored by the late Senator Paul Wellstone from Minnesota, expressed the sense of Congress that a day of peace and sharing should be established at the beginning of each year. This day would encourage people around the world to gather with family, their faith community, and neighbors to share a meal and to pledge to work for peace in the new year. It called upon Americans to match or multiply the cost of that year's meal with a contribution to fight hunger.

In the following year, 2001, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution asking the global community to set aside the first day of the year to recognize the importance of international unity, peace, and sharing.

Today, Madam Speaker, we are considering House Concurrent Resolution 317, sponsored by my colleague Congressman CONYERS, recognizing that in order to implement these resolutions calling for peace and the alleviation of worldwide suffering, we must rely heavily on the family. It is the family that is the basic unit of a civil society. The family is where our values are learned and carried out. Stability and peace in the global community can only be accomplished one family at a time.

A special day where families worldwide can sit down to a meal and pledge

to work locally for peace and to end injustice in their own communities will no doubt have a worldwide impact.

I urge an ''aye'' vote, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

I would first like to commend my good friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking member of our Judiciary Committee, JOHN CONYERS, for introducing this resolution and for advocating on behalf of Global Family Day for many years. I would also like to thank Chairman HYDE for allowing this resolution to move to the floor.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is very simple and very important. It provides that the Nation should set aside time dedicated to eradicating violence, hunger, and poverty, and to establishing greater trust and fellowship among peace-loving nations and families everywhere.

As we commemorate the lives lost in the tragedy that occurred on September 11, 5 years ago, it is particularly fitting that the President designate a day for eradicating violence and embracing our common humanity.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the author of this resolution, my good friend and distinguished colleague from Michigan, Congressman CONYERS.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise absolutely overjoyed at the action that has been taken by the Committee on International Relations. I begin by commending the distinguished chairman, HENRY HYDE, a current member of the House Judiciary Committee, where he was once chairman; my dear friend from Florida, Subcommittee Chairwoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN; and, of course, the esteemed TOM LANTOS, the ranking member of the committee.

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot tell you how thrilled I am to see a resolution come back to the floor for the observance of Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing. It has a long history that the gentlewoman from Florida remembers all the way back to the late Senator Paul Wellstone. And I join all of you as we in the Congress continue to search for a way to find peace in Iraq and Afghanistan, in every corner of the world.

There are widely divergent views about how we arrive at peace; but most of all, we are deeply concerned about the subject. We have families, constituents, individuals who are longing for peace in the world and an end to the suffering caused by poverty, disease, and hunger. Untold numbers of our friends, neighbors, parents, children are hoping that there can be more understanding, more generosity, more genuine friendship and more caring among people of all faiths and cultures. We struggle with military strategies and budgets, economic considerations, and international issues.

But there is one matter which we can come together on, and this is House Concurrent Resolution 317 that calls upon the President to issue an annual proclamation calling upon the Nation's citizens to observe Global Family Day. It has been done before in the year 2000, and we are so pleased that it is being done today.

I would remind you that in 2001 following the tragedy of 9/11, the United Nations General Assembly took the same action. In more than 20 nations around the globe, the leaders of those countries have personally endorsed this initiative. And here in the Nation's capital, Mayor Anthony Williams proclaimed just 2 months ago that January 1, 2007, would be a day for all Washingtonians to become peacemakers in whatever capacity that they can.

Frequently, this took the role of people breaking bread with someone, some family of another faith, of another community, and the idea was to get to know one another better. It provides a way of saying to the world that we understand that it is the individuals, the 6.6 billion people on this planet, interacting with one another that will allow this to happen.

So I thank the tireless advocates who have worked on this matter across the years. Organizationally, they include the Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Life Institute, the National Association of Former Foster Care Children of America, the Global Family Day Foundation; but, of course, it is the founder of this idea that came to us in the Congress years ago with young children who wanted to start doing something along with the former Senator from Minnesota, and that is Ms. Linda Grover, whose dedication and commitment has inspired all of us to this unique, creative way to bring us all a little closer together.

Again, my thanks to the floor leaders that have managed this.

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his work on this resolution, and I ask the gentleman with his consent that I could be added as an original cosponsor.

Mr. CONYERS. Yes. I thought that he was, but if he wasn't, he is now.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4½ minutes to my friend and colleague from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, let me thank my distinguished friend from California for yielding and his leadership, as well as my friend from Texas. Most of all, let me offer my great appreciation for Congressman CONYERS and his service and his commitment and years of working on human rights and justice issues in the United States and his collaboration on this legislation. I thank him for allowing me to be an original cosponsor for something as instructive and as insightful as this legislation is. I am delighted to be joined with a number of cosponsors now, Mr. KUCINICH as well.

And I rise today to applaud the concept, but also to say how vital and how important this idea is. We celebrate Thanksgiving and holidays around the Christmastime. Many of the different faiths call that timeframe in their own faith a name. We have commemorations around the birth of Christ for Christians, and other faiths have their commemorations. We are eager to promote peace, as I am an original cosponsor of the Department of Peace, offered by my good friend from Ohio, Mr. KUCINICH. But I do not know if we realize how crucial it is in this day and time to have a Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing.

□ 1645

Maybe if you would take a journey with me back to New Orleans, reminiscing and remembering the horrificness of Hurricane Katrina and the time we spent just a few weeks ago, some 28 Democratic Members who traveled throughout the gulf region. We really went to see the improvement, to be able to shake hands and to see where people had moved from the devastation of 2005. But yet we found ongoing devastation.

We bent down and we offered prayers as well as action. And it made me think more and more that we needed to be able to come together as families to address the question of hurricanes and earthquakes, famine and genocide. Because right here in the United States in the gulf region, there are still people who are homeless, not because they are not Americans who have contributed to this country, and veterans and people who have built their homes and raised their families, but because this government has failed to provide them with the resources necessary to go back to their homes, private insurance companies have not been able to provide them with relief to build their homes.

So this day is a broader concept of being able to bring us together, not to forget those who are now hopeless sometimes and helpless, but to be able to say that we want to reunite families.

Then I want you to think of the child soldiers around the world. I thought maybe we had extinguished that. I offered legislation early in my career

about the elimination or the lack of use of child soldiers by cutting some of the foreign relations funding. But yet child soldiers exist. They are still fighting in guerilla warfares around the world. Children who are barely 8 years old, 7 years old, 12 years old have their limbs eliminated because they are now in guerilla warfare. We need this Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing.

Then, of course, the crisis in Sudan. I am asking the President, as he interacts with, again, the nation of families, to demand that the President of Sudan step aside to allow the African Union peace keepers to enter into their territory, to prevent the famine, the genocide, the brutality, the violence, the violence against women.

For those of us who have been in the Sudan, who have been in Chad where the refugees are, the stories are horrific. If you sit down on the dirt floor as I have done with the women of Sudan to tell you about how they are raped continuously when they simply go out to get wood, in order to provide fire in order to survive. This is a time now that the United Nations when the President can demand, along with the General Assembly and the U.N. Security Council for the Sudan to step aside and the world family to condemn them.

And so this Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing that the President should call for the United States, should be that we pray for the peace and human rights of the people of Iran, for the troops to come home so that they can be redeployed out of Iraq, and that the Iraqi Government can take their rightful place of leadership.

We pray for those in the gulf region who are now suffering. This resolution is so crucial, so vital, so important, because it is a day of action, because it is calling for action. All of us who are comfortable in our homes right now need to be aware that the world is in trouble.

But the United States, taking the high moral ground, has the opportunity, based upon this wonderful resolution, to be instructive and to gather its people around to ask for the freedom and peace and justice of the people in Sudan, freedom and human rights, and a new day in Iran and a standing down of any military violence by the United States against Iran.

And, as well, the redeployment of our troops out of Iraq, and the governance of the people of Iraq so that we can promote this Global Day of Peace and Sharing.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 317: Requesting the President to issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, and for other purposes.

Global Family Day originated from One Day Holiday, a day of peace and sharing together around the world, and is the first major shared global event to annually celebrate the entire human family, its achievements, and its aspirations.

Global Family Day is an important and necessary day set aside to represent the unity of the human family. At a time of war, hatred, poverty, and friction within our international community, Global Family Day reminds us to remain hopeful, to weather the stormy seas, to look for peace in the midst of the tempest.

We need a Global Family Day, because we are indeed in the midst of a troubling time. In the United States alone, there is plenty to remind of us of the urgency of fighting many of our social maladies.

In 2000, 16.2 percent of persons in the United States under the age of 18 were considered poor.

In that same year, 11.7 million American children younger than 18 lived below the poverty line.

One out of every six American children (16.3 percent) was poor in 2001. More specifically, 30.2 percent of African-American children, 28 percent of Hispanic children, 11.5 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children, and 9.5 percent of Non-Hispanic White children were poor.

1 in 1.056 children will be killed by guns before the age of 20.

Children make up 12 percent of all crime victims reported to the police, including 71 percent of all sex crimes and 38 percent of all kidnapping victims.

Participation in the observance of Global Family Day is an important gesture of compassion. When we recognize Global Family Day, we support the idea of peace over war. When we recognize Global Family Day, we support the fight against poverty. When we recognize Global Family Day, we support world unity over ill-motivated antagonism.

As the leader of the free world, the United States must foster a sense of empathy, compassion, and brotherhood. We must join our bothers and sisters around the world to build hope at a time of doubt, to spread love and unity in a time of hate and division.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution requesting the President to issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing, and other purposes.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California for this opportunity to address this resolution, which calls upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing.

The prayer of Saint Francis begins with these words: make me a channel of our peace. And the gentleman from San Francisco, certainly throughout his career and here again today, affirms his work for peace. I want to join with him and the prime sponsor, Mr. CONYERS, in requesting the President to issue this annual proclamation.

This is an important moment when we can unite as a Congress to stand for peace. Because if we can do that for one moment, and we can advocate that it be done for a day, we know that we have the capacity to master the social arts to the point where we can make peace a practice in our everyday lives, not just the absence of war, but the active practice of a capacity for mutuality, for understanding, for peace-giving, for peace-sharing. We have this capacity.

We showed it last week when we came together on a resolution honoring the Dalai Lama with a Congressional Gold Medal. I want to thank Mr. LANTOS for giving me the opportunity. Because of you, I had the chance to meet the Dalai Lama years ago.

We have this capacity in this Congress to bring our aspirations to the highest level possible and in that way connect with the whole world. Because what this talks about is one day around the world for peace and sharing. So we at this moment unite with a family of humanity. We at this moment stand strong on principles of human unity. We can do that in this moment, and we can do it for many other moments as well.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for his heartfelt and warm words. I yield 2 minutes to my distinguished colleague and very good friend from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join with all of those who have expressed an interest and a concern in this resolution. I rise because I firmly move that we have the capacity to go far beyond where we are.

As a matter of fact, I recall John Kennedy once saying that peace is not found only in treaties, covenants and charters, but in the hearts of men.

I suspect that if he were alive today, he would say in the hearts of men and of women. I happen to believe that we learn what we live, and that if we actively pursue the concepts of peace that we find different ways to handle conflict resolution.

I know that there are people who would say, what is the point in talking about this? Well, I will tell you the point. And I want to commend the gentleman from Michigan, because I remember reading a book that said, in the beginning was the word. And, of course, the words go forth. And people internalize those words. So I am pleased to join all of those who have spoken on this issue today. I do believe that peace is possible.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank all of my colleagues for their very significant statements. We have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent

resolution, H. Con. Res. 317, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN AND EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRANIAN PEOPLE

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 976) condemning human rights abuses by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressing solidarity with the Iranian people.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 976

Whereas the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran was elected through a controlled and fixed election process which does not allow the Iranian people to freely elect their leaders;

Whereas the Government of Iran is unaccountable to the will of the Iranian people;

Whereas the Government of Iran is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

Whereas the Government of Iran within both its legal framework and everyday practice continues to violate the civil and human rights of its citizens, in particular women, religious and ethnic minorities, and vocal opponents of the regime;

Whereas the Government of Iran practices discrimination against the aforementioned groups through denial of access to education and employment, seizure of private property, violent suppression of peaceful protest and freedom of assembly, arbitrary arrest and detention, physical and mental torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment, such as public executions, hanging, and stoning, and extra judicial killings of dissidents and ordinary citizens;

Whereas the Constitution of Iran promotes religious intolerance and prohibits religious freedom by endorsing one religion to the exclusion of other religious beliefs;

Whereas an unelected theocratic ruler and clerical elite exert control over the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the Iranian Government;

Whereas the Iranian judiciary is not independent and can be subject to arbitrary dismissal by the clerics;

Whereas on December 16, 2005, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution discussing the human rights violations by the Government of Iran and insisting that Iran eliminate in law and in practice discrimination toward the aforementioned groups;

Whereas international human rights organizations have called for investigations into violent crackdowns of peaceful protests and other human rights violations which the Government of Iran has ignored;

Whereas Iran sent to the June 2006 inaugural meetings of the United Nations Human Rights Council Saeed Mortazavi, Tehran's Prosecutor General responsible for jailing hundreds of journalists and linked to the 2003 arrest, imprisonment, and murder of an Iranian-Canadian photojournalist, showing a blatant disregard for the issue of human rights reform; and

Whereas the Department of State's Country Report on Human Rights Practices and Report on International Religious Freedom document the human rights abuses by the Government of Iran and list Iran as a ''Country of Particular Concern'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and strongly urges the international community to bring pressure on Iran to halt discrimination and violence toward its citizens, in particular women, religious and ethnic minorities, and vocal opponents of the regime;

(2) urges the Government of the United States to continue to pressure the Government of Iran into making measurable improvements in the human rights situation for the Iranian people; and

(3) expresses its unity with all Iranian people and shares their desire to see Iran become a free country with transparent, democratic institutions and equal rights for all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of freedom for the Iranian people, and I want to thank Congressman CROWLEY and Congressman LANTOS for their efforts in support of this resolution. I want to thank Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN for her tireless efforts to see Iran become a free and democratic state.

For nearly 30 years, Iranians have lived under the extremist policies of religious clerics. Their human rights violations against the Iranian people defy common belief. The Iranian people deserve, indeed desire, the opportunity to live in a free and democratic society.

This is the dream of the vast majority of Iranians, and we should help them make this dream come true. It has been far too long since we have looked at the human rights record of one of the most evil regimes of the modern era. We know that Iran is the single largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world. And we know that their leaders wish to continue inflicting terrible pain and suffering on any group of people who do not share their extremist beliefs.

However, we must also remember the pain and suffering of the Iranian people at the hands of their leaders. Congress, the President, and the international community must address the excessive human rights abuses by Iran's Government. Since the Khomeini revolution in 1979, Iran has been ruled by a string of tyrants who use religion and politics as an excuse to persecute their own people.

Religious, ethnic, and gender discrimination are practiced every day by the Iranian judicial courts and the clerics who run them. People or groups critical to their government are given few rights under the law and no rights in practice.

The Government of Iran practices discrimination against its own people by denial of access to education and employment, seizure of private property, violent suppression of peaceful protest and freedom of assembly, arbitrary arrest and detention, physical and mental torture, cruel, inhumane and degrading punishment such as public executions, hangings and stoning, and extra-judicial killings of dissidents and ordinary citizens.

Iran's clerical regime has been a serial abuser of human rights since it violently took over the country in 1979. But it is clear that since President Ahmadinejad took power, the abuse of Iranian citizens has increased. Under his rule, Iranians are tortured for simply practicing a different religion, for speaking a different idea, and even for not supporting the extremist mullahs.

The oppression of women under the Iranian regime is perhaps the most brutal and most offensive. Iranian women are not allowed to attend universities, to hold jobs, to drive a car. They are forced to cover their entire bodies in public. In many cases of rape, the accused man will not face any punishment, and the woman in question will be accused of fornication, will be imprisoned, and eventually put to death.

One case involved a young woman who was deeply in love with her husband, and without evidence or reason, and against the pleas of her own husband, was found guilty of adultery. She was buried alive up to her chest in Tehran and then stoned to death.

In other cases of abuse, people have been arrested, beaten, and even killed for eating during the month of Ramadan, or doing anything that the mullahs deemed inappropriate. According to Iranian law, the religious police can interrogate a suspect without a lawyer present, which allows them to beat prisoners until they confess, most often to a crime that they did not commit.

□ 1700

We must never forget these violations when we consider Iran's place in the international community. President Bush has attempted to engage the Iranian Government to end their illegal nuclear weapons program. This effort is crucial to keeping the world safe from a nuclear nightmare.

However, the effort must not end there. The United States and its allies must continue to pressure Iran to end the severe human rights violations against the Iranian people.

It is appropriate for us to raise this issue here today. This evening the President of Iran will address the world from the floor of the United Nations. His pleas and support of a nuclear Iran will fall on deaf ears. His continued defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions must end, and the international community must begin the process of isolating the Iranian regime until true reform in that country begins.

Human decency requires us to stand unanimously against Ahmadinejad's oppression of his own people. We must continue to pursue freedom for Iran through diplomacy, but we must also not shrink from our responsibility through the option of strength.

We must also pursue the policy of internal resistance and change from within Iran. The policies and extremist views of Iran's religious mullahs are not representative of the entire nation of Iran. There are many Iranian people who desire to be free and are willing to fight for it. I have met with them, and we should do everything we can to forward their cause.

Now is the time to save their countries, for them to save their own countries, for them to save their own societies and for them to save their own religion.

I would like to leave with a few powerful stories of Iranian citizens who were persecuted and killed at the hands of their own government. The first involved an innocent Iranian girl. The religious police will not even respect the private boundaries of the home. A young girl in Tehran was arrested for swimming in her home pool in a bathing suit. She was found guilty of causing a ''state of arousal'' in a neighbor, from whose house she could be seen. She was sentenced to 60 lashes, but she died after the 30th lash.

Another involved an Iranian photographer in 2003. A single mother, she had struggled to raise a child and to build a career in exile. Her son remembers her as a small but feisty and courageous woman who loved freedom. She left her son for a business trip to Iran and Afghanistan. She was arrested while photographing a group of people inquiring about their detained loved ones. She was interrogated and beaten for refusing to confess to being a spy. She died in a military hospital in Tehran as a result of her torture.

Another case involved a 52-year-old Iranian salesman, 1998. He believed in the Baha'i religion. In the eyes of the state, this made him the apostate, a member of the unprotected infidel community. He, too, was arrested and found guilty of converting a woman to his religion. He was eventually hanged in a public square on July 21, 1998.

These are just but a few stories that highlight the need for this important resolution, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I first would like to commend my good friend and distinguished colleague from Texas for introducing this important resolution and for his powerful and eloquent words.

This body has regularly condemned Iran for its nuclear program, which is clearly designed to build weapons of mass destruction. We have condemned Iran for its support of terrorism and other aggressive policies. But for far too long we have not adequately called attention to the broad range of horrific human rights violations practiced by the Islamist Republic of Iran.

In fact, Madam Speaker, Iran is among the world's leading human rights abusers. It is morally incumbent upon us to affirm our commitment to support the victims of Iranian repression and to express our sympathy for the long-denied democratic desires of the Iranian people. That is exactly what this resolution does.

Madam Speaker, I believe we all are familiar with many aspects of Iranian repression. Iran today is an authoritarian, intolerant, theocratic state, and the Iranians are at the mercy of a cynical, self-indulgent clerical elite, whose extremist views do not even reflect those of the majority of Iranian clergy.

We all know how Iran treats religious minorities, most infamously the Baha'i, and we all know that Iran represses democratic dissent, cooks the elections to make sure that the winners are theocrats unrepresentative of the will of the Iranian people.

But perhaps nothing more eloquently expresses Iran's cynicism about human rights than Iran's willingness to sign all manner of international agreements committing itself to adhere to international human rights standards while, in practice, scorning those very standards. Presumably the Iranian regime thinks it can fool us by signing documents.

In that regard, Madam Speaker, Iran's attitude towards its human rights obligations and its nuclear obligations are two sides of the same coin. Tehran takes neither set of commitments seriously.

By supporting this resolution, we will send a skyrocket message to the Iranian regime and to the Iranian people that we see through the regime's veil of cynicism, that we will keep the pressure on the Iranian regime to cease its repression, and that we look forward to the day when Iran will join the ranks of democratic, human-rights-respecting, law-abiding countries. We will not cease to believe in the goodwill and democratic inclinations of the vast majority of the Iranian people.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield to my friend from Ohio as much time as he might consume.

Mr. KUCINICH. Once again, I am grateful to the gentleman from California for the opportunity to offer a slightly different perspective. While I continue to associate myself with my good friend Mr. LANTOS in the celebration of the imperative of human rights globally, I have specific concerns about the tenor of this resolution and its relationship to the administration's policy of ramping up for a war against Iran.

Again, I want to state that this is the third resolution that has been brought before this House this evening. You have to read it in the context of administration actions, which have been documented in published reports, that relate to an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Iran by sending elements of the Department of Defense inside of Iranian territory; number two, by planning a bombing, targets inside Iran; number three, by planning a naval blockade in the Strait of Hormuz where 40 percent of the world's oil flows through.

We have to look at this in a broader context of an administrative foreign policy, which is really aimed at creating not stability, but instability in the region. You can look at the July 2006 Vanity Fair article, which goes into detail about the unfortunate administration escapade of tricking up a case for uranium from Niger with respect to Iraq. One of the administration's key advisers in that article basically made the case for chaos, which is an administration, I believe, policy. Now we are looking at Iran.

Now, this resolution, 976, in the third article, expresses its unity with all the Iranian people, shares their desire to see Iran become a free country with transparent democratic institutions and equal rights for all.

I pointed out earlier in debates that Iran had a democratic government under Mossadegh; that in October of 1951, under Mossadegh, Iran sought to nationalize its oil industry. That then resulted in a draft resolution submitted to the United Nations by the United Kingdom, and supported by the United States and France, as depicting Iran then as a threat to international peace and security.

Then we saw a coup d'etat that was organized by the U.S. and the U.K. Yes, we ought to stand for democracy. We ought to also stand for truth with respect to the historical unfolding of what we say we stand for.

Where does this resolution lead? Does it lead to a continued insistence that the Government of Iran restore human rights to everyone in Iran? If it does, wonderful. We all ought to go along with that. But if his resolution is just another brick on a path towards war, look out. This looks like Iraq all over again, and that is what my concern is.

If this resolution sets us on a path to war, how many of us in the Congress are prepared to see this administration borrow money from China and Japan to go to war against Iran, as they have

borrowed money from China and Japan to go to war against Iraq? We have to look at what we are doing here.

While this resolution, I am sure, will pass overwhelmingly, we have to see that circumstances are being set in order which could lead us towards a path of war against Iran. We have to ask ourselves, is that what we really want?

I can stand here with my colleagues and say, absolutely, I support the religious freedom of the Baha'i. I do. Absolutely. I support human rights for all people in Iran, and I do. Absolutely. I support democratic principles in Iran and every other country in the world, and I do.

But I am not for war against Iran. I don't believe the American people want war against Iran. I don't think they wanted war against Iraq, but they were dragged into it.

I am just offering these remarks as a cautionary note to make sure that we have our eyes open as we walk in the days ahead with respect to policy and Iran. Yes, we need to make sure that Iran has peaceful uses of its atomic energy. We have an obligation to do that.

But, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I maintain that we should begin first with direct negotiations with Iran. Second, we should assure Iran that we are not going to attack it. Third, we should demand that Iran open itself up to inspections once again by the IAEA. Fourth, we need assurances, and they are fair, that Iran is not going to be developing nuclear weapons.

There is a way out of this, and I am hopeful that in our stand for human rights, we are not paradoxically beginning a process that would deprive millions of Iranians of their human right to life.

I thank the gentleman from California for his friendship and also for his willingness to see debate in this House of the people. You have always done that, Mr. LANTOS. Whether we have agreed or not, you have always been willing to see the debate continue.

Mr. LANTOS. I thank my friend for his generous words.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 976, condemning human rights abuses by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressing solidarity with the Iranian people.

It is astonishing that the Iranian government denies that there is a human rights issue in the country. The Iranian government suppresses expression and opinion, and persecutes individual for peaceful expression of their political views. Iran is constantly cited and criticized by our Department of State, Amnesty International, and many other human rights watch groups for its human rights record.

I have long been an advocate of a free, independent, and democratic Iran; an Iran that is non-threatening to its neighbors and that honors its commitments in the world community. There is no dissent in the world community about the inherent dangers of nuclear proliferation in the region.

For years, I have been a supporter of the democratic movement in Iran, and today more than ever, the people of Iran need to be supported, empowered, and given the confidence to create for themselves a new nation. Wars and appeasements are temporary actions, and not even close to a solution.

The only effective way to achieve a lasting peace and prosperity in the region is to support the Iranian people, men, women and children, in their endeavors to make Iran a democratic state.

Democracy is a struggle, but democracy is just. No one should experience the terror of a government that would torture or kill its own. We cannot ignore a country that gleefully thwarts international peace treaties and human rights conventions.

This bipartisan bill sends a very clear message that any government that oppresses its people will not be tolerated, and a smug tyranny is not acceptable. I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

May we all soon see peace and stability return to all of the Middle East.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 976, introduced by my colleague, Mr. MCCAUL from Texas.

H. Res. 976, Condemns human rights abuses by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and expresses solidarity with the Iranian people.

The resolution notes the injustices inflicted upon the people of Iran by an unaccountable government against their will.

It urges the President and the international community to increase pressure on the Iranian government to improve its human rights situation and expresses unity with the Iranian people.

The recent untimely deaths of two political prisoners, reinforces the urgency that Iran free all prisoners of conscience.

The incarceration of student and political opposition activists is a form of intellectual terrorism that seriously undermines indigenous democratic reform.

In addition, the recent decision by the Iranian government to outlaw the Center for Defense of Human Rights, which was established by the first Muslim Woman Nobel Laureate, Shirin Ebadi, is a violation of Iran's post revolutionary constitution.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is an opportunity for the American people to convey to the Iranian people that we support their efforts to bring freedom to their nation.

As a co-sponsor of this measure and strong advocate for the right of every human being—every Iranian—to live free from intimidation and be able to exercise their fundamental rights, I ask that we render our strong support for this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 976.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1715

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE SUCCESS OF THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 959) recognizing and supporting the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 in increasing adoption and the efforts the Act has spurred including National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month, and encouraging adoption throughout the year.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 959

Whereas since the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, the number of children adopted from foster care has increased significantly, with approximately 51,000 children adopted from foster care in fiscal year 2004 alone;

Whereas despite this remarkable progress, approximately 118,000 children in the United States foster care system are waiting to be adopted, and 49 percent of these children are at least nine years old;

Whereas adoptive families make an important difference in the lives of the children they adopt by providing a stable, nurturing environment for those children;

Whereas National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to find permanent, loving families for children in foster care;

Whereas both National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month are in November;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services launched a series of public service announcements promoting the adoption of children eight and older in 2002;

Whereas more than 6,000 children have been placed into adoptive homes since the Department of Health and Human Services launched www.adoptuskids.org, a national photo listing service for children awaiting adoption across the United States;

Whereas judges, attorneys, adoption professionals, child welfare agencies, and child advocates in 45 States and the District of Columbia participated in 227 events in conjunction with National Adoption Day in 2005; and

Whereas these events finalized the adoptions of more than 3,300 children from foster care: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes and supports the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 and of the efforts it has spurred;

(2) recognizes and supports the goals and ideals of National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month; and

(3) encourages adoption throughout the year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 959, a resolution that recognizes the successes of the landmark Adoption and Safe Families Act and honors National Adoption Day and Month. I was proud to introduce this resolution and the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which we honor today.

The work of Congress over the past decade has led to dramatic improvements for children in the foster care system. In fact, since 1997, the number of children adopted from foster care has increased significantly, from 28,000 in 1998 to 51,000 in 2004.

I have been pleased to work with my colleagues to refocus Federal child welfare programs, to ensure the best interests of children are first. The way to make that happen is to place children in safe, permanent loving homes. That is why National Adoption Day and Month are so important.

This year, National Adoption Day will take place on November 18, 2006, and is designed for communities around the country to highlight adoptions. Last year, over 227 events were held in 45 States, which finalized the adoption of 3,300 children.

I have been honored to participate in these events the past several years. To be part of such a special occasion reinforces the need for further efforts to move children into adoptive homes. I would like to applaud the Department of Health and Human Services for their efforts in this cause. In 2002, HHS launched a series of public service announcements promoting the adoption of children eight and older and activated the Web site www.adoptUSkids.com. This Web site has helped move 6,000 children into adoptive homes.

The consideration of this resolution today is timely. Tomorrow, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute will be holding its annual Angels in Adoption awards ceremony. This event also seeks to highlight those who have opened their hearts and their homes.

The couple I nominated this year, Pam and Randy Streu of Midland, Michigan, have three biological children, and have opened their hearts and their home to seven adopted children and almost 50 adoptive foster children placements. They deserve special recognition, not just for the number of children they have helped, but for helping those children that needed the most love. When others may have said the challenge was too great, Pam and Randy stepped in, recognizing that each life was worth fighting for and that it was about hope and love.

I first got involved by helping families with their adoption proceedings in private practice as a court-appointed lawyer. Since that time, I felt that the government should do more to encourage adoption and help those in the foster care system. That is why it is so important to recognize families who make extraordinary efforts to welcome children into their family.

I thank my colleagues who have helped me move this resolution forward, including Mr. HERGER, chairman of the Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee; Mr. MCDERMOTT, the ranking member of the subcommittee; and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE and Mr. OBERSTAR, cochairs of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. I look forward to further working with my colleagues to promote adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak in behalf of H. Res. 959. As was described by Congressman CAMP, the bill recognizes National Adoption Month and National Adoption Day. It commemorates the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act and encourages adoption.

As Congressman CAMP noted, it is particularly timely that the House take action on this resolution today, the week we have heroes from around the country into Washington celebrating the Angels in Adoption gala in recognition of their extraordinary commitment to the adopted children that have been brought into their families.

I want to tell about the North Dakota family of Pat and Michelle Beyer. They are in town this week. They have quite a story, like each and every family being honored at the Angels in Adoption gala.

Pat is a North Dakota National Guardsman. He is on leave from his service in Iraq. At home, Michelle is raising two naturally born children, three adopted children, each of whom have some special needs, and this wonderful loving couple is now proceeding with the adoption of yet another child with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, your heart goes out to people like this. They really reflect, I believe, the very best of goodwill and compassion in our country. I am so proud of them.

Even as I speak about what they have done to make their home available to children and what we recognize with adopted families everywhere in terms of the homes they create for children, the fundamental and profound truth of adoption, in my view, is that the parents benefit far more than they possibly could contribute to the children. I know a little bit about what I am talking about on this score. These are my children, Kathryn and Scott, adopted from Korea, the best thing that ever happened to me. So I care just enormously about this resolution.

I also want to for a moment congratulate my colleague DAVE CAMP for his role in the passage of what has been a very important piece of legislation to encourage and move adoption forward.

I remember very well 10 years ago with C–SPAN on in my office hearing floor debate about a proposal that was precisely something that had been worrying me for months, because I had been told in North Dakota by judges that things were out of whack, that in this business of evaluating children in foster care, the best interests of the child were being hopelessly confused and sometimes placed secondary to the goal of family reunification of completely dysfunctional families.

Now, maybe Congress had a role in its earlier legislation in giving some confusion out there to the social services system, but there was one thing we knew, and we knew very clearly, to a person, Republican and Democrat, and I also commend Barbara Kennelly, the lead cosponsor on the legislation, and that was put the best interests of the children first, foremost, exclusively, only. We wanted nothing more than to advance the interests of the children.

The legislation straightened that out, and made no bones about it, and then placed substantial expectations on the system with defined time limits about children who had been just kicked down the road without end in interim foster care arrangements. We wanted them moved out of those arrangements and into permanent adoptive status, to the extent we possibly could.

You know, there are a lot of things we do here, and we sure mean the best as we do them, and we don't always know how they work. Well, the jury is in on this one, and this act has worked, I think perhaps even better than I had hoped it might.

The number of children annually adopted out of the foster care system has nearly doubled, from 27,000 in 1996 to 52,000 in 2004. The North Dakota situation I had been worrying about, we have gone from 41 adopted in 1996 to 128 in 2004. We tripled.

So, again, David Camp, as I told you that day in debate, you have got a real fine piece of work here, and I again commend you for the leadership you have played in such an important bill.

Another aspect of this bill, in addition to the time expectation put forward by Congress, we actually put some money on the table as positive incentives for States that really took the charge to move children into permanent adoptive homes. We have paid out more than $200 million to States since that legislation. I think it has without question proven to be an extremely effective and cost-effective use of taxpayer dollars. It is also a reminder and something I think we need to keep in mind as we look at what else we can do that the carrot needs to go along with the stick.

Another positive bill we passed in advancing legislation is moving the tax credit for adoption expenses into law and then increasing it so it more appropriately reflects expenses incurred by a family in seeking to adopt.

I have gotten to experience the miracle of adoption in my life, but I don't think that in any way you have to have some kind of financial status to experience this miracle. We want everybody

to be able to experience this miracle, if they want to open their homes and raise children in an adoptive family. So increasing this tax credit from $5,000 to $10,000 is important. My Ways and Means colleague, NANCY JOHNSON, has played an important role on that one.

Now, for all the platitudes, and they were especially in commemorating the successes important to make, I know David doesn't feel like we have arrived and gotten the job done. I don't either. We have more to do. There are 118,000 foster children today waiting to be adopted. To find a loving home for every waiting child, we should focus more attention on recruiting adoptive parents and on providing post-adoption services to help families with ongoing medical, counseling and referral needs.

In the passage of this resolution, I hope there is a bit of this vote that represents a recommittal to continuing to explore whatever we can do to unite families, parents who want to provide a loving home to innocent, precious children that so richly deserve it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Dakota for his comments, a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE).

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 has proven itself instrumental in increasing adoption in every month of the year. The legislation made it easier to adopt children across State lines, and it also provided some financial incentives to States to improve their foster care systems.

Prior to adoption of the bill, the number of children in foster care and the length of time that they spent in foster care was rapidly increasing. In just two decades prior to the mid-1990s, the number of children in the foster care system more than doubled. The crisis was threatening to overwhelm various State social services departments. More importantly, it was brutally unfair to hundreds and thousands of children.

However, since passage of the bill in 1997, the number of children adopted out of foster care has actually increased by some 65 percent. In 1996, only 31,000 children were adopted. By 2004, that number rose to 51,000. It is a start. We certainly need to have more adoptive families out there.

Moreover, not only are more children being adopted, but they are also spending less time in the foster care system. However, this Congress must not forget that hundreds of thousands of children still remain in the foster care system and more still remains to be done. This year alone, those older foster care children, some 19,000, will age out of the foster care system. Additionally, one in five children will still languish in foster care for more than 5 years.

□ 1730

I am a board member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institutes, and it is a very, very worthwhile group out there to promote foster parents, good foster parents, as well as adoption.

I have two beautiful children I gave birth to and one child that I adopted. She was an older, hard-to-place child, and usually in the adoption system the older children, especially someone designated as hard to place, are the last ones to be adopted.

I certainly hope that this resolution will shine some light on the need for more people to step forward and consider adoption of children of all ages. In my heart of hearts, I have a very special place for my adoptive daughter who is now an adult. She was a special needs child. They do require more time, they require more love and certainly a lot of structure, and with that plan, they can become very productive members of society.

We must build on the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 by continuing to raise awareness about foster youth and adoption.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the preceding speaker, our colleague, for the personal commitment she has made in this area she indicated, and I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

First, I want to commend him and Mr. CAMP for their outstanding leadership and the passion with which they display relative to this issue and their personal involvement.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the significance of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. ASFA provided sweeping changes in Federal child welfare law designed to ensure children's safety and to quicken permanent placements in the event that a child could not return home.

By enacting the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Congress recognized the need to align Federal incentives with the desired goal of providing abused and neglected children safe, permanent homes. This law has helped move States to promote adoption and has helped moved children into permanent homes.

In praising ASFA, I want to take a moment to highlight the need to develop similar policies to promote permanency more broadly. ASFA has done much to promote adoption, but policymakers should extend ASFA's successes to other areas of permanency to address the needs of hundreds of thousands of children for whom adoption is not appropriate.

Using ASFA as a model, the bipartisan Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care recommended that Federal policies create subsidized guardianship programs and State incentives to promote permanency more broadly, be it via reunification, adoption or guardianship.

Also, we must use our understanding of the implementation of ASFA to make it better. I am particularly concerned about the over 29,000 children who have entered our child welfare system due to parental incarceration, most often from nonviolent acts. The parameters set forth by ASFA do not align well with those of the criminal justice system, leading to a permanent separation of many children from their parents and family.

I encourage my colleagues to consult the wonderful policy brief by the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law on the topic. ''Rebuilding Families, Reclaiming Lives,'' draws attention to hurdles created by the lack of consistency in Federal policies with regard to children of incarcerated parents. It also offers policy recommendations to promote stability and well-being for the children.

Mr. Speaker, I also take this second to commend the One Church, One Family, One Child program in Illinois, who are indeed going to be here for the Angels in Adoption gala. They have developed a unique program of recruiting families to become foster parents to children coming out of correctional institutions. I commend them for that outstanding work and note Reverend Parks, Reverend Nelson and Ms. Hunt who have developed a fantastic program with the other members of their board.

Again, I commend the gentlemen for their outstanding work on this issue.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 959, which recognizes and supports the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 in increasing adoptions. I would like to thank the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. CAMP, for introducing this resolution and for his work to enact legislation to improve the lives of abused and neglected children.

The number of children adopted from our nation's foster care system has substantially increased since enactment of the Adoption and Safe Families Act from 31,000 in 1997 to over 51,000 in 2004. I applaud the judges, attorneys, state officials, and other adoption professionals who have worked tirelessly to move foster children more quickly into permanent, loving families. National Adoption Day in November 2005 finalized the adoptions of more than 3,300 children from foster care and I hope the November 2006 National Adoption Day is even more successful.

There are currently 118,000 foster children available for adoption and we must do more to find them loving families. Almost half of these children are aged 9 or older and therefore at risk of spending their entire childhood in foster care and aging out of the system without a permanent home. In 2003, President Bush signed the Adoption Promotion Act, which extended the availability of adoption incentive payments to the States while promoting the adoption of older children. We will continue to support policies that ensure children who cannot be safely reunified with their parents are

moved quickly into permanent, adoptive homes.

I also wish to recognize the many talented and hardworking staff at the Department of Health and Human Services for their outstanding work in this area. More than 6,000 children have been placed in adoptive homes since the launch of www.adoptuskids.org., a website which connects families with waiting children. We must do more to help connect would-be adoptive parents with these children to ensure every child grows up in a safe, loving family.

Again, I wish to thank the gentleman from Michigan for introducing this resolution. I'd like to personally thank the many child welfare professionals and most importantly all the adoptive families across America who have made a permanent commitment to improve the lives of these vulnerable children. They are the real heroes behind the many improvements we have seen in recent years.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 959 recognizing and supporting the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 in increasing adoption and the efforts the Act has spurred including National Adoption Day, National Adoption Month, and encouraging adoption throughout the year.

As the Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I especially understand the importance of providing a stable, safe, loving home for all of our children. Under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, the number of children adopted from foster care has increased significantly, with approximately 51,000 children from foster care in fiscal year 2004 alone.

This progress must be recognized, yet we know that there is much more work to be done to ensure that every child has a safe, permanent and loving home. On a daily basis, in America, children enter the foster care system as victims of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Most of them will wait at least five years before being adopted. Siblings will be separated from each other and most will have moved at least three times before being adopted. It is currently an unfortunate fact that one in five children will never be adopted, and will be forced out of the foster care system at the age of 18 with little or no family support.

Modeling the successes of the Adoption and Safe Families Act and National Adoption Day, states have significantly increased adoptions from foster care. National Adoption Day inspires a collective national effort to raise awareness to the 119,000 children in foster care awaiting permanent, loving families. For the last six years, National Adoption Day has seen the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with courts, judges, and attorneys to finalize adoptions and find permanent, loving homes for foster care children.

Let me add that I hope that before we recess, we may have the opportunity to make a further statement with H.R. 1704, Second Chance Act. This important legislation reauthorizes, rewrites, and expands crucial provisions regarding adult and juvenile offender reentry demonstration projects, in order to address issues of recidivism and the effects of the criminal justice system and child welfare services on families.

The welfare of children must continue to be a priority for all Americans. Every child deserves a warm, safe, stable home environment. It is imperative that we support and recognize the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 of increasing adoption of foster care children. Because children are the future, we must support them in the present.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, seeing no other speakers, I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 959.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STUDENT AND TEACHER SAFETY ACT OF 2006

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5295) to protect students and teachers, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5295

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics reported in the 2005 Indicators of School Crime and Safety that in 2003 seventeen percent of students in grades 9–12 reported they carried a weapon. Six percent reported having carried a weapon on school grounds.

(2) The same survey reported that 29 percent of all students in grades 9–12 reported that someone offered, sold, or gave them an illegal drug on school property within the last 12 months.

(3) The United States Constitution's Fourth Amendment guarantees ''the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures''.

(4) That while the Supreme Court affirmed the Fourth Amendment's application to students in public schools in New Jersey vs. TLO (1985), the Court held that searches of students by school officials do not require warrants issued by judges showing probable cause. The Court will ordinarily hold that such a search is permissible if—

(A) there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will reveal evidence that the student violated the law or school rules; and

(B) the measures used to conduct the search are reasonably related to the search's objectives, without being excessively intrusive in light of the student's age, sex, and nature of the offense.

(5) The Supreme Court held in Board of Education of Independent Sch. Dist. 92 of Pottawatomie County vs. Earls (2002) that random drug testing of students who were participating in extracurricular activities was reasonable and did not violate the Fourth Amendment. The Court stated that such search policies effectively serve the School Districts interest in protecting its students' health and safety.

SEC. 3. SEARCHES BASED ON REASONABLE SUSPICION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each local educational agency shall have in effect throughout the jurisdiction of the agency policies that ensure that a search described in subsection (b) is deemed reasonable and permissible.

(b) SEARCHES COVERED.—A search referred to in subsection (a) is a search by a full-time teacher or school official, acting on any reasonable suspicion based on professional experience and judgment, of any minor student on the grounds of any public school, if the search is conducted to ensure that classrooms, school buildings, school property and students remain free from the threat of all weapons, dangerous materials, or illegal narcotics. The measures used to conduct any search must be reasonably related to the search's objectives, without being excessively intrusive in light of the student's age, sex, and the nature of the offense.

SEC. 4. ENCOURAGEMENT TO PROTECT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency that fails to comply with section 3 shall not, during the period of noncompliance, receive any Safe and Drug Free School funds after fiscal year 2008.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''Safe and Drug Free School funds'' includes any funds under Part A of Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 5295.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It gives me great pleasure to rise in support of H.R. 5295, the Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006, of which I am a cosponsor. This bill is designed to help schools take actions to keep students and property safe from harm and destruction.

We have an obligation to make the learning environment in which our children attend free from weapons and drugs. By allowing school officials the ability to use their experience and intuition, we are eliminating these threats of violence before they have an opportunity to occur.

Specifically, this bill encourages local school agencies to establish policies that put parents and students on notice that weapons and drugs will not be tolerated within school bounds, and gives power to school officials and full-time teachers to enforce such policies. We all know that the threat of weapons

and drugs in school can create an intimidating and threatening environment making teaching and learning difficult.

The Supreme Court has ruled, and here today we should agree, that ''apart from education, the school has the obligation to protect pupils from mistreatment by other children, and also to protect teachers themselves from violence by the few students whose conduct in recent years has prompted national concern.''

Mr. Speaker, violence in our schools is simply not acceptable. Nothing is more important than the safety and the well-being of our children. Parents should feel secure that when children go to school, they will be completely safe. I say that again, completely safe. This bill provides some assurance that we are doing all that we can as parents, as educators and as leaders of this Nation to protect our children.

If we do not take a stand to keep our schools safe, to keep our children safe, and to allow our teachers to feel that they are in an environment where they are protected, then how can we achieve this goal?

Unless addressed by Congress, public school children will continue to be unnecessarily exposed to unacceptable levels of crime and school violence.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS), for introducing this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 5295, the Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006. A vote for this bill is a vote in support of school officials and teachers who fight to keep weapons and drugs out of our public schools every day and a vote to allow our children to have a safe learning environment.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the original cosponsors of the Zero Tolerance for Guns and Weapons in Schools, I have long supported the effort to make our schools safer, and, in fact, schools are among the safest places in our entire society for children, but this legislation, I do not quite understand what it is trying to do.

The suggestion here is that if we just pass this law, that somehow schools will become safer. The fact of the matter is every school district, every State has a policy with respect to the bringing onto campus of drugs, which it is illegal to have on campus, off campus, in your own home or anywhere else, and the use in bringing on weapons, which we have a very strong zero tolerance policy against the bringing of any guns or weapons onto school sites.

It seems to me that this legislation is somehow founded in the idea that if the Congress just votes, this will, in fact, happen.

Tragically, what we have seen is while people are asking us to vote on this policy, which is already in place in most school districts, or all school districts in all of the States in accordance with the State court decisions and in accordance with the Supreme Court decisions, what we have is that the Republicans are masking the fact that what they do is they keep gutting the Safe and Drug-Free School Grants to the States. They cut those grants from $437 million in 2005 to $346 million in 2006, and the House Republicans want to cut them even further to $310 million next year.

So the very funds that this Congress has determined and we worked in partnership with States and school districts over the last several years to make our schools safer, to help educate children about the dangers not only of the drugs and of weapons and various kinds of social behavior, they are now in the process of cutting those, but they want to pass a law that says to do what we have as a matter of existing policy, except that this law, in fact, exposes the district to much more litigation now because now, under the guise of this law, they have to go back through, and if a student is searched under this law, the questions are raised all over again which many districts have tried to settle under State law, under State court interpretations, so that they can have a policy that works, that the schools are on notice of, and the students are on notice of, and that the parents are on notice of. The fact of the matter is that the policy appears to be working across this country.

So, when we get all done with this, I think what we have with this legislation is an effort to try and cover what are the more serious votes taken by this Congress to slash the funding for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools legislation.

Also, this legislation, if it were to be passed into law, fails to take into account additional legal standards that have been imposed by State courts. A uniform search policy can cause difficulties for school districts and would require it to establish policies to address requirements of H.R. 5295, as well as legal standards that apply to respective jurisdictions.

The Congressional Research Service adds that enacting Federal legislation with respect to school-based searches could, therefore, interfere with areas of traditional State and local responsibility, of which there is no showing that the States and local school authorities are not meeting their responsibilities to their students, to the teachers, to the staff in the schools, to the parents and to the communities.

The question is, I guess, just a question of whether or not you think you trust the Congress more simply to pass a law, of which there have been no hearings and no discussion with local officials about how to do this, or whether you trust the people who are running the schools—the school boards, the school administrators, the principals, the district superintendents—who, in fact, have the responsibility for the safety of the children of their districts and of their schools.

It is not much more complicated than that, and you do not have to take it from me, because the fact is that the National School Boards Association, the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the National PTA and the Great City Council Schools all oppose this legislation.

Why do they oppose this legislation? Because this legislation only makes it a very difficult job that they have been working at and policies for the safety of our students that they have been refining over the last decade.

□ 1745

This legislation just throws all of that open to new interpretations, to new exposure to liability on the questions of their actions that they take on a daily basis to keep our schools safe, to keep our children safe.

They understand this policy. They have developed these policies they have done in conjunction with the communities that they represent. Now Congress wants to fly over on suspension without hearings and drop down a new policy, one size sort of fits all, for all of these school districts, for all of the schools, when in fact the people we represent in our communities have been working on these policies a long time before this legislation was ever suggested. They have been working on them successfully, they have been working on them within the intricacies of State and Federal law, and they have developed the policies in cooperation with the communities and with the parents.

And I would hope that we would reject this legislation, and we would let those who have to take the responsibility, those who absorb the liability for their actions, and those who have local cooperation within their communities on engaging these policies, that they would in fact be allowed to go forward and continue those policies, and we would heed the concerns of the Congressional Research Service that we now have a Federal policy that, if it was to pass, requires this kind of reaction by all of the States to see whether or not they comply with this Federal law when in fact they are already complying with the efforts in their communities to keep their schools safe.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with tremendous pride to support the Student and Teachers Safety Act. Drugs and violence simply do not belong in our schools. Our teachers and children are entitled to a safe learning environment, free from weapons and illicit narcotics.

Time and again at the Columbine High School in Colorado; in Jonesboro, Arkansas; and in my home State, at

Heath High School in Paducah, Kentucky, shocking acts of violence have been planned and unfortunately executed in our schools.

Last week in Green Bay, Wisconsin, the situation turned out differently. Local law enforcement reacting to information gathered by school officials were able to thwart an attack being planned by high school students and save lives.

The National Center for Education statistics found in 2003, the last year for which we have statistics, 17 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported having carried a weapon; 9 percent of students reported having been threatened or injured with a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club, on school property. During the same period, 29 percent of students have been offered drugs on school grounds within the previous 12 months.

My friends, these numbers are simply unacceptable. The presence of drugs or weapons in a classroom is not conducive to a productive learning environment. Metal detectors have become a fact of life in many of our schools. Despite that fact, weapons are still appearing in our classrooms.

When I was a child in school, no one doubted who had control of the classroom. Teachers were clear in their ability to control their learning environment. Today, we have the opportunity to restore some of that clarity.

I am a firm believer in our Constitution and our Bill of Rights, and I take my oath of office to defend those rights very seriously. This legislation is simple. This act does not issue a blank check to anyone to conduct random, unfounded, or mass searches. It does not change the fourth amendment standards on search and seizure. In fact, it is the parents and school officials who are empowered by this legislation. These men and women will work together in individual communities across the Nation to develop school safety policies that suit the unique needs of their teachers and students and are based on the constitutional standards set by the Supreme Court. Nothing more, nothing less.

H.R. 5295 requires local education agencies to have policies in place that adopt a standard articulated by the Supreme Court in New Jersey v. T.L.O. This standard allows teachers and school officials to use their experience and judgments to make decisions that will help control their classrooms and protect the students.

Our schools and classrooms should be safe places, free from drugs and weapons; and safety should not be a luxury. Parents should be confident in the safety of their children at school. Children should be able to focus on their studies without fear; teachers and school officials should be confident in their judgment and ability to control school property.

I am very proud of the work that we have done with the National Education Association to improve the language of H.R. 5295 since its original introduction, and I am even more pleased that the National Education Association has endorsed this legislation as a positive step toward a safer learning environment for teachers and students throughout our schools.

A special thank you is due to Chairman MCKEON and his staff for their assistance. I would especially like to recognize the work of three staffers, Joanna Glaze, Taylor Hansen and James Bergeron. I urge all my colleagues to support this simple, commonsense legislation to provide our students and teachers with a safer, more productive learning environment.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for yielding.

I rise in strong support of the expressed intent and expressed purpose of this legislation. But as one who taught for 6 years in probably one of the toughest schools and one of the toughest communities in the country, I have some serious reservations about what this legislation actually does. And I guess my reservations are not unfounded, because I find that the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, the Council of Great City Schools, Parent Teachers Association, American Civil Liberties Union, the American Federation of Teachers, and of course my own school district, one of the largest in the Nation, the City of Chicago School System, has some concerns. And many of the concerns expressed is that the legislation is unnecessary, because many school districts already have policies on search that take into consideration State laws and State court decisions. They are concerned that it overrides local and State policies on school searches, and that it establishes one-size-fits-all, although all of us know that circumstances in different locations and locales are very different.

It sends a confusing message to schools on what legal standards are, and it establishes a policy that gives teachers authority to conduct searches when authority for determining who could search should rest with the school board. And, of course, it penalizes schools inappropriately for noncompliance by withholding safe and drug free funds, even though not all school districts receive these funds.

So, Mr. Speaker, while the intent is good, and while all of us want to see our schools be the safe and secure places we know that they need to be, I find this legislation to be duplicative, unnecessary, and that it takes away in some instances rights that should be reserved certainly for local communities to make determinations about. For that reason, I oppose this legislation.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes at this time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. KIRK. I thank the gentleman. Columbine High School, Colorado. East High School, Green Bay. Hubbard Wood School in Winnetka. Each of these schools bore witness to an attack or an attempted attack using a gun in school. I served as a teacher, and I remember the kids who were the brightest lights of our country's future, and I also remember those who bore scrutiny as people who might bring a gun to class. Americans have the right to send their kids to safe, gun-free classrooms. Just last week, alert school officials foiled a Columbine-style attack on a Green Bay school. In my district, we were not so lucky in Winnetka. There, an attacker shot and killed a child and wounded five others in class. Jeffrey Phillips of my own staff was a first grader in that school on that day.

I spoke with a number of fellow teachers who say they hesitate before searching a child. Dan Larsen and Andrew Conneen, teachers at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, told me that teachers many times hesitate before searching a book bag for a gun. They worry about being punished; they worried about being sued. This bill reassures teachers that they have the power to search any minor child to make sure that their classroom remains gun free. And the Nation's largest teachers union, the National Education Association, strongly endorsed this bill.

Like all other American workers, teachers deserve to work in a safe, drug-free, and gun-free workplace. Diane Shust and Randall Moody of the NEA wrote: ''On behalf of the 3.2 million members of the NEA, we would like to commend you for introducing the Student and Teacher Safety Act. H.R. 5295 will help promote a safe school environment.''

The National Education Association knows that there is nothing more important than the safety of children and teachers who have dedicated their lives to education. Let common sense prevail. This bill puts teachers back in charge and makes classrooms safer. If this bill helps one teacher stop one Columbine massacre, then Congress today will have served the Nation well and protected its children. I urge Members to support this bill so strongly backed by the National Education Association.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the so-called Student and Teacher Safety Act. This bill would impose a one-size-fits-all policy on student searches on every school district in the country.

You know, in my experience with children and youth, it is a mistake to assume that every student is as guilty as a few troubled persons, making all youth feel guilty because a few actually are.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would strip Safe and Drug-Free School Acts funding from any school district that decides that local parents, that teachers,

and administrators know better than Congress how to make their schools safe. In fact, the President and the Republican Congress have cut Safe and Drug-Free funding every year since the year 2002.

This bill's proponents argue that it will clarify student search rules for school administrators and teachers, but the American Association of School Administrators has said that the bill simply will create unnecessary new Federal mandates. The American Federation of Teachers has said that the bill will complicate school districts' efforts to develop student search policies. And the National Parent Teacher Association, the PTA, has said that the bill fails to improve the safety of students and school personnel.

Mr. Speaker, if we are serious about school safety, we will reject this bill, we will reject the President's and this Congress's continuing cuts to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, and we will stop any new program that would label all youth as guilty.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 5295, the Student and Teachers Safety Act of 2006, and I commend my friend and colleague GEOFF DAVIS for introducing this important legislation.

According to a 2004 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, one in 10 students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property; three out of 10 students in grades nine through 12 reported that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property. Moreover, more than seven out of 10 public schools experienced one or more violent incidents in 1999 and 2000, amounting to over 1.5 million violent incidents.

Louisiana families are demanding safe schools for their children, and H.R. 5295 would codify the guidelines established by the U.S. Supreme Court in New Jersey v. T.L.O., which held that reasonable searches by school officials do not require a warrant signed by a judge if the search would reveal that the student violated the law or school rules.

□ 1800

The bill would also require that any searches be conducted in a manner appropriate to the age, gender and nature of the offense.

This is just codifying what the Supreme Court already has ruled upon, and it simplifies this matter as opposed to confusing it as is suggested by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

This legislation is supported by the National Education Association, and it will help promote a safe school environment for both students and teachers.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished chairman of the Education and Workforce Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON).

(Mr. MCKEON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5295, the Student and Teacher Safety Act. This legislation builds upon the past efforts of this Congress to bolster school safety, and I commend Mr. GEOFF DAVIS of Kentucky for leading the charge on this legislation.

Enhancing school safety is not a new priority for this House. Earlier this year, we sent to President Bush legislation that included a proposal of my committee colleague Mr. PORTER to provide schools with criminal history records for individuals seeking to work with or around children.

Today we have the opportunity to take another step towards safer classrooms. The Student and Teacher Safety Act simply asks schools to adopt policies that put them in compliance with the legal standard established by the U.S. Supreme Court pertaining to the reasonable nature of student searches. As such, the bill enjoys a tremendous consensus of support, including leading teacher unions and school safety advocates. These groups support the commonsense steps that this bill will take, and I include a letter from the National Education Association for the RECORD at this point.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, September 8, 2006.

Representative GEOFF DAVIS,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 3.2 million members, we would like to commend you for introducing the Student and Teacher Safety Act (H.R. 5295), which will help ensure a safe teaching and learning environment in all public schools. We thank you and our staff for your willingness to engage in a constructive dialogue and to make changes to your original draft based on our suggestions. With these changes, we are pleased to offer our support for H.R. 5295.

NEA believes that a safe and effective learning climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in public schools. All students and education employees must be safe from violence, and procedures must be in place to prevent and eliminate all types of disruption or harassment that might occur.

H.R. 5295 will help promote a safe school environment by requiring districts to have in place policies addressing reasonable student searches. Specifically, required policies under your bill must allow education employees or school officials to conduct student searches when acting on reasonable suspicion based on professional experience and judgment. We believe that such policies will help ensure that classrooms, school buildings, school property, and students remain free from the threat of weapons and other dangerous materials.

We believe your bill strikes a proper balance between ensuring the safety of students and educators and protecting student rights. We thank you for your efforts on this important issue and we look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure great public schools for every student.

Sincerely,

DIANE SHUST,
Director of Government Relations.
RANDALL MOODY,
Manager of Federal Policy and Politics.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, this legislation empowers full-time teachers or school officials, when acting on suspicion based on professional experience and judgment, to search students on public school grounds, and allows States and school districts to conduct reasonable searches to ensure that the schools remain free of all weapons, dangerous materials or illegal narcotics.

I cannot imagine anyone that would oppose this kind of legislation based on the fact that we all, working together, want to make schools safer for our students and teachers.

In order for our Nation's students to get the most out of their education, it is imperative that they feel safe inside the classroom. Last week's report of two Wisconsin teens plotting a school shooting spree only served to underscore the need to ensure that our teachers, administrators and parents have the necessary tools to keep the classrooms safe and focused on what they are meant for, learning. Parents should be at ease when sending their children to school. Teachers and administrators should know that we are empowering them with resources to make sure that we are keeping their workplaces safe. And most of all, students deserve to learn in as safe an environment as possible.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important measure to bolster school safety.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to thank my friends and colleagues, Mr. DAVIS and Mr. KUHL, for introducing this outstanding legislation, and I am proud to join them in strong support of the Student and Teacher Safety Act.

As a father, I am very concerned about my children's safety during the school day. Every morning, my wife and I, we send our children off to school to prepare them for a better and brighter future. I expect them to learn in a safe, secure and nurturing environment, an environment incompatible with weapons and violence. Unfortunately, statistics show that this may not be the case.

I am shocked by the statistics that describe the threat drugs and guns pose in our schools. According to a national survey of high school students in 2003, 29 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported having been offered drugs on school grounds; 9 percent of students reported having been threatened or injured by a weapon such as a gun or

knife on school property; and almost 7 percent of students in these same grades said they had missed at least one school day because they felt unsafe at or traveling to or from school.

Statistics show America has a problem. It is up to Congress to provide the tools our educators need to combat this threat. Back when I was a student in high school, if a teacher asked me to show them the contents of my locker, I would have complied. It was a simpler time. Today our teachers' hands are tied with incoherent regulations and the constant threat of litigation that prevents them from confidently acting on perceived threats to their students. That is why this act is so important.

H.R. 5295 will provide much-needed clarity for school districts in setting policies for school searches. Specifically, this legislation will require school districts and other local education agencies to create a policy that is firmly founded upon the fourth amendment protections and follows the controlling Supreme Court decision on school searches, New Jersey v. TLO.

I am proud to be listed as a cosponsor of this legislation, and I call on my colleagues in Congress to support its passage here today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional speakers other than myself to close, so if the gentleman from California would like to close at this time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is rather interesting that this legislation comes up with no hearings, no discussion with the school districts, no discussion with local authorities who have the obligations to meet the demands that we cavalierly talk about here. This Court decision I believe is 1985. That is what school districts have been struggling with is to try to put in a policy that meets the test of reasonableness and also protects them in terms of liability and the teacher in terms of liabilities.

We cited Columbine here. I can't believe there is a school district in Colorado that doesn't have a policy dealing with guns on campus in compliance with Federal law where there is zero tolerance for guns on campus or you can lose your funding.

Paducah, Kentucky, and the tragedy there, I can't believe there is a school district in Kentucky that has not responded in the years since those tragedies.

The fact of the matter is every school district in the country has a policy like this because they can, in fact, be sued for not having a policy, for not taking reasonable steps to protect their students and faculty and staff.

Here we have the United States Congress apparently read a report of statistics and studies of all of the activities which is illegal under State and Federal law. They have read that now and have decided 10, 20 years later that the school districts are not doing anything, are not taking action, and the Federal Government has to tell them to take this action. It is incredibly arrogant and an insult to people who every day live on the front lines for the protection of those students and those faculty members and those staff members and for those children whose charge they have to think that somehow they have not developed the best policy they possibly can within the confines of the fourth amendment, within the confines of their State interpretation of State laws.

That is what school districts struggle with all of the time. That is what they do for a living. Those are the measures they can take. This idea that somehow if you codify this Supreme Court decision, the TLO decision, that somehow if you codify this and they are immune from liability, no, they are not. Someone would go to the court and decide it was an unreasonable search, and you will be right back with liability, just as is done all of the time under the fourth amendment.

What school districts have tried to do is to build a policy over a period of years to try to make it the most effective policy and also make sure that they are not exposing the district and others to all kinds of different liabilities, but to have an effective policy.

Does anybody here suggest that is not their purpose? Does anybody suggest that they have not done this since Columbine, they have not done this since Paducah, or they have not done this since the shootings in Oregon? Of course they have.

And you know what, they would probably be in a much better standing if you would keep cutting the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act, if you quit cutting the money that is available to them in education so they could make these policies even more effective, and they could spend even more time with the students working on why these behavior patterns should not be allowed, why schools should be a safe place, why schools should not be allowed to be the street. There should be bright lines between the schools and streets. That is what schools are seeking to do all the time.

But here is the Federal Government 10, 20 years later after the policy was announced saying, I guess you are not doing anything, and we are going to tell you to do it. We are going to tell you to do it this way or the highway.

It just doesn't make any sense. It just doesn't comport with what all of us know is going on in the districts that we represent. Either that, or you have never visited a school, you have never talked to a school administrator, or never talked to a superintendent or a teacher. The fact of the matter is that they struggle with this all of the time, and they do it within the confines of the decision that you say is controlling. They know that. That is why they hire attorneys. That is why the policy parties that are responsible for coming up with this, that is why they oppose this.

But this will be the Congress who tells them, do it our way, that is the only way; and now we will have to go back through all of these policies and start over from ground zero. It just doesn't make any sense. It denies what we all know is, in fact, taking place in school districts and schools all over this country every day as those individuals struggle to keep those educational institutions safe for the students who are attending them. I urge my colleagues to vote against this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close on this bill.

It seems as though there is a long distance between this side of the aisle and the other side of the aisle, because my friend Mr. MILLER fails to recognize the statistics that the honorable gentleman from Kentucky mentioned. Regardless of the fact that there are school districts who are attempting to make changes in their disciplinary policies protecting students, the fact is that violence remains a very, very big issue in our schools. It needs to be resolved.

People, like the teachers on the front lines combating this violence and protecting our students, are not necessarily afforded the opportunities to do that. That is what this bill does. I applaud Mr. DAVIS for bringing it forward.

The bill simply asks, and while my friend Mr. MILLER would try to distort what the bill actually does, the bill asks school districts, each and every one of them separately, to develop and implement a policy on school safety. Nowhere in this legislation is language requiring what the policy should look like or how strict or relaxed it should be. The legislation merely allows each and every individual school district to craft unique policies with guidance established by the Supreme Court decision. That Supreme Court decision, and I will quote again, simply says apart from education, the school, and I underline the school, has the obligation to protect pupils from mistreatments by other children and also to protect teachers themselves from violence by the few students whose conduct in recent years has promoted national concern.

Now let's go to the actual language. I don't know whether Mr. MILLER has had an opportunity to read the bill, but the bill itself specifically says each local educational agency shall have in effect throughout the jurisdiction of the agency policies that ensure that a search described in subsection (b) is deemed reasonable and permissible. No question about it.

Some people might concern themselves with the fact that this might be

an overextension of personal rights, but the Supreme Court has defined what is permissible. In no way does this bill give permission for school officials to perform mass or strip searches of students. No way.

Also, Mr. MILLER, let me assure you that while you can make castigations about this side of the aisle trying to balance the budget, nobody on this side of the aisle has suggested that funding for the implementation of this program is to be deleted. As a matter of fact, we openly support increased funding to implement this policy.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006, H.R. 5295. Although this bill seeks a noble end, protecting our children and their teachers, it gives me pause because it authorizes school systems to strip away student's constitutional rights.

All children should feel safe at school. All teachers should be secure while carrying out their mission of teaching our children. We all agree on this. However laudable these goals of safety and security may be, they should not be sought at the expense of the rights of our children.

School is not only a place where children learn math, reading, and writing.School is also a place where children learn how to be citizens in a free society. Being a citizen of this country means living free from the fear of unnecessary searches and government harassment. My fear is that when we expose our children to constant violations of their privacy through limitless drug tests and unreasonable searches during their school years, they will grow up to believe that violations of their constitutional rights are the norm in our country. The future generations that we will depend on to defend the Bill of the Rights may no longer know what those rights are. They may be all too willing to accept ever-increasing government intrusion into their private lives. In an age of warrant-less wiretaps and secret surveillance, this is not a risk I am willing to take.

In addition, this bill does not adequately protect the privacy interests of our students. In 1969, the Supreme Court said that children do not leave their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse door. Yet this bill is so vaguely and broadly worded that it potentially opens a "Pandora's Box" of 4th Amendment violations in our schools. This bill does not require that school officials actually suspect an individual of wrongdoing before searching them. Rather, it allows for searches if a school official thinks that his or her actions will help the school remain drug free.

I am worried that this bill will lead to instances similar to what happened in Goose Creek, South Carolina in November of 2003. School officials in Goose Creek suspected that a student was dealing drugs in the high school.

They then subjected 150 students to a police raid, and drug dogs going through student's backpacks. The searches occurred despite the fact that the suspected drug dealer was absent from school on that day. Not surprisingly, no drugs were found. Unfortunately, 150 students were humiliated by the school officials that are supposed to guide them on their journey to adulthood.

School safety is a vitally important issue. Children must be able to learn in an environment free from fear and violence. Providing students and teachers with safe schools does not require students to check their civil liberties at the door. The Bill of Rights envisions a balance between individual freedoms and law enforcement. That balance has served our country well for more than two centuries. There is no reason that such a balance cannot be struck in our school system. If we want safe schools we should invest in afterschool and mentoring programs. We should invest in programs that teach children how to resolve conflicts in non-violent ways. We should teach our children that they have privacy rights that follow them wherever they go, including to school. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5295, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5295, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1815

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING AMERICA'S SENIORS

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 874) recognizing and honoring America's seniors, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 874

Whereas older Americans have made countless contributions to the strength of the United States;

Whereas older Americans include members of the "Greatest Generation" who fought in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and other military conflicts, and have sacrificed at home and abroad to keep America free;

Whereas in the United States and much of the world, older individuals throughout history have been viewed with respect, honor, and dignity as sources of wisdom and experience;

Whereas this year the first of the "baby boom" generation turn age 60, adding to the 49 million Americans who are age 60 or older, including over 5 million who are older than age 85; and

Whereas the talent and experience of older Americans can be utilized to meet community needs in critical areas such as education, health, community-based and faith-based social services, and homeland security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the importance of older Americans to the Nation's past and future;

(2) encourages multigenerational activities providing opportunities for children and students to listen and learn from older Americans; and

(3) urges all Americans to honor and respect older Americans, and to offer appreciation for their contributions to the strength of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Resolution 874.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Resolution 874, a bipartisan resolution to honor older Americans.

Today, supporting the needs of older Americans is more important than ever. More than 49 million people in the United States are over the age of 60, making it the fastest-growing group in the country. By the year 2050, just a short time away, that number will reach nearly 90 million people and comprise almost a quarter of our population.

This resolution recognizes the countless contributions that older Americans have made to the strength of our Nation. They include members of the Greatest Generation, who fought in World War I and in World War II and the Korean War and other military conflicts. They have sacrificed at home and abroad to keep America free.

Mr. Speaker, with an increasing number of Americans as they retire, our Nation can continue to benefit from the rich talent and experience of these citizens. In communities across the United States, older Americans work and volunteer through community-based and faith-based organizations to support education, health services for the poor and other vital community needs. In June the Education and Workforce Committee approved bipartisan legislation to strengthen and reform the Older Americans Act. The Senior Independence Act, as it is called, transforms and modernizes the law to meet the needs of today's seniors and the needs of the Nation as the population ages. Final enactment will help older Americans to identify home- and community-based long-term care options, including consumer-directed care models as well as other supportive services that can help prevent or delay the need for expensive institutional care. These reforms will help millions of Americans stay healthy and remain in their homes and communities and could yield significant savings. I say that again: and could yield significant savings to taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased this body is taking this time today to honor older Americans for their many contributions to the strength of our great Nation, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to express my strong support for House Resolution 874, a resolution recognizing and honoring older Americans. I would like to thank my friend and fellow Texan, Congressman CHARLIE GONZALEZ, for bringing this resolution forward.

As the resolution so eloquently states, older Americans have made countless contributions that have strengthened our Nation. We are gradually bidding farewell to our Greatest Generation that fought for our freedom and values during the Great Depression and two world wars. We must never forget their strength of character and willingness to sacrifice for the greater good of our Nation and our world.

We are now welcoming the baby boom generation into the ranks of older Americans. This presents great challenges and great opportunities for our Nation. The challenge is to keep our intergenerational compact of Social Security and Medicare, not by privatization schemes or giveaways to special interests, but by prudent management and fiscal responsibility. We can meet that challenge.

We have the opportunity to leverage the tremendous talent, the energy, and desire to make a difference that older Americans bring to our communities. This generation of older Americans is healthier and more educated than any generation before it. Its best years are yet to come. Our older Americans continue to make valuable contributions to our society every day. We must not waste this invaluable national resource.

As we celebrate the contributions of older Americans today with this resolution, let us recommit ourselves to honoring them by completing the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and supporting our Federal programs that improve the quality of life of older Americans and enable them to continue to contribute to their communities and to our great Nation.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I join my friend Congressman GONZALEZ of Texas and many of my colleagues to support H. Resolution 874, a resolution to recognize and honor older Americans for their role in helping make America great.

It is so important that policymakers in Congress recognize the contributions of our Nation's seniors by keeping their needs in mind as we develop legislation. We must take this responsibility seriously as we consider issues such as Medicare, Social Security, veterans benefits, housing, and health care. We also owe it to our seniors and our seniors' grandchildren to do a better job of balancing the budget here in Washington, D.C. No matter what the issue, we must always work to ensure that the needs of our seniors do not get overlooked.

I am thankful to the TREA Senior Citizens League, the largest nonpartisan seniors group in the Nation, and its national chairman, Ralph McCutchen, for supporting this resolution.

The sacrifice of our seniors and the Greatest Generation should not go unrecognized. And, again, I thank my friend from Texas for introducing this resolutions. And I am pleased to support this resolution and encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the resolution.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to my good friend and colleague CHARLIE GONZALEZ from San Antonio, who serves on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear friend Mr. HINOJOSA, my colleague from Texas, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank my colleagues on the Education and Workforce Committee, especially Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member GEORGE MILLER, who was here earlier, for bringing this bill to the floor. I also thank my friend Congressman WALTER JONES for supporting this legislation from the very beginning and serving as its Republican lead. His efforts, in addition to those of his staff, have been very important throughout this process. I would also like to recognize, as Congressman JONES acknowledged, the Senior Citizens League and the important role they have played in promoting and supporting this resolution. Their chairman, Ralph McCutchen, wanted, above all, to see a bill that honors and pays tribute to the many sacrifices made by America's seniors, including those who have served in the military. I certainly appreciate the support demonstrated by this very important organization.

This resolution recognizes the importance of honoring senior citizens. This can be done in countless numbers of ways, from simple gestures of kindness towards a stranger to the actions made by this Congress that will impact seniors as a whole.

We are the policymakers. We should not make policy that makes it more difficult for seniors to vote. We should not have policy that makes it more difficult for seniors to obtain medical care. We should not enact policy that makes it more difficult for seniors to obtain prescription drugs or to afford housing.

This resolution encourages children and students to take time to learn from senior citizens. It is imperative that we as a society facilitate the sharing of information among the different generations.

I don't want anyone to get the idea that this resolution is about seniors and what they have accomplished in the past. In part it is, but they are not relegated to the past. And let me quickly explain.

Today's seniors are active in our present-day workforce, contributing every day their ideas and their labor. They are part and parcel of this wonderful economy and capitalist system of our country. With their skill, their training, and their education in how they prepare those other generations, they are part of our future.

I would like to end it with an observation. I was trying to figure out what constitutes a senior. Is it someone 60, 70, 80, 90? Well, age is important and it isn't important. It is important in this respect, and I am going to quote Sir Oliver Lodge: ''Never throw away hastily any old faith, tradition or convention . . . They are the result of the experience of many generations.''

So age is important as far as experience and having the life experiences. I still remember my father, when I used to ask, that was a brilliant man, Dad, where did he go to school? And he said, it was the school of hard knocks. So many times it is just life experiences that will instill that wonderful knowledge that is imparted to succeeding generations.

But age does not constitute and define seniors. And I will end it here with a quote from Satchel Paige: ''Age is a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it don't matter.''

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague DANNY DAVIS from the great State of Illinois, who serves on the Education Committee and the Government Reform Committee.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of our Nation's senior citizens.

Senior citizens are a vital part of society to whom we have a responsibility of ensuring both economic and physical well-being. Seniors provide vital links to our past as well as serve as the caregivers to over 6.1 million of the Nation's children.

I recognize the importance of caring for our elderly and providing them with the services they need to live independently. I have a Seniors and Eldercare Task Force, composed of an outstanding group of experts who advise me on key issues of importance to the seniors in my district. They advised me on key issues for the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

Within the bipartisan process surrounding this bill, I am pleased that I was successful in including important changes to the act. My local experts said that seniors raising their grandchildren needed great access to financial support and information about

programs for which they are eligible. They said that seniors needed more services in their communities to avoid spending down their assets to qualify for Medicaid. They said that we needed a greater focus on mental health and elder justice. The reauthorization of the Older Americans Act addresses these needs, and I hope that this important legislation will pass this Congress.

However, we must do more to assist grandparent caregivers. These grandparents make up 5.7 million households living with over 6.1 million children, evidence that many of these grandparents are oftentimes caring for more than one child. In my congressional district, there are over 10,000 grandparents who are responsible for their grandchildren's needs. Indeed, the Seventh District of Illinois, my congressional district, has the highest percentage of children living with grandparents in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that you can measure the greatness of a society by how well it treats its young, how well it treats its old, and how well it treats those who have difficulty caring for themselves. In this case when we provide grandparents, senior citizens, with the opportunity to help raise their grandchildren, then we are doing the Nation a great service.

I thank all of those who rose to support this legislation.

□ 1830

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, but I would like to make some closing remarks. I want to say that I had the pleasure of serving, together with Chairman PATRICK TIBERI from Ohio, and together we led our committee through the effort of the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

It was of great satisfaction to me, because we were able to pass amendments and requests for an increase in authorization for this very important act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support and cosponsor H. Res. 874, a resolution honoring America's senior citizens for their contributions to American life. I am particularly pleased by the language encouraging young people to seek out and talk to our Nation's seniors about these seniors' life experiences. Talking to beloved grandparents, aunts, uncles, or friends about their past is a great way to learn history and gain an understanding of the past that simply cannot be obtained from a textbook.

I hope that, in the limited time left in this congressional session, we would further demonstrate our commitment to America's seniors by voting on my Senior Citizens' Improved Quality of Life Act, H.R. 5211. H.R. 5211 contains a number of items of great importance to America's seniors. H.R. 5211 helps seniors by:

Repealing all taxes on Social Security benefits. Since Social Security benefits are financed with tax dollars, taxing these benefits is an example of double taxation. The benefits tax also reduces Social Security benefits by subterfuge.

Ensuring that Social Security trust fund money is used only for Social Security. H.R. 5211 requires that all money raised for the Social Security trust fund will be spent in payments to beneficiaries, with excess receipts invested in interest-bearing certificates of deposit. This will keep Social Security trust fund money from being diverted to other programs, as well as allow the fund to grow by providing for investment in interest-bearing instruments. Ending the raid of the Social Security trust fund is a vital first step in any serious Social Security reform plan. Protecting the trust fund also demonstrates our commitment to putting the priorities of the American people ahead of special interest pork barrel spending.

Repealing provisions of Federal law that restrict the ability of senior citizens to form private contracts for health care services. This restriction violates the rights of seniors who may wish to use their own resources to obtain procedures or treatments not covered by Medicare, or to simply avoid the bureaucracy and uncertainty that come when seniors must wait for the judgment of a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, bureaucrat before finding out if a desired treatment is covered. H.R. 5211 also stops the Social Security Administration from denying Social Security benefits to seniors who refuse to enroll in Medicare Part A. Forcing seniors to enroll in Medicare Part A as a condition for receiving Social Security violates the promise represented by Social Security. Americans pay taxes into the Social Security trust fund their whole working lives and are promised that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. Yet, today, seniors are told that they cannot receive these benefits unless they agree to join another government program.

Allowing seniors who neither want nor need to participate in the Medicare program to refrain from doing so and ensuring seniors have the freedom to use their own resources to obtain quality health care will strengthen the Medicare program for those seniors who do wish to receive Medicare benefits. Of course, H.R. 5211 does not take away Medicare benefits from any senior. It simply allows each senior to choose voluntarily whether or not to accept Medicare benefits.

Ensuring that Social Security benefits only go to American citizens. Proposals, such as those contained in the Reid-Kennedy immigration bill, to allow noncitizens, including those who entered the country illegally, to receive Social Security benefits are a slap in the face to America's workers and seniors. H.R. 5211 ensures that only American citizens who have paid into the Social Security trust fund can receive Social Security benefits.

Providing seniors with a tax credit to help cover their prescription drug expenses not covered by Medicare and repealing Federal barriers that prohibit seniors from obtaining quality prescription drugs from overseas. Even though Congress added a prescription drug benefit to Medicare, many seniors still have difficulty affording their prescription drugs. One reason is because the new program creates a ''doughnut hole,'' where seniors must pay for their prescriptions above a certain amount out of their own pockets until their expenses reach a level where Medicare coverage resumes. H.R. 5211 helps seniors cope with these costs by providing them with a tax credit equal to 80 percent of their out-of-pocket pharmaceutical costs.

H.R. 5211 also lowers the price of pharmaceuticals by making two changes in the law to create a free market in pharmaceuticals. First, H.R. 5211 allows anyone wishing to import a drug to submit an application to the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the U.S. or is adulterated or misbranded. Second, H.R. 5211 ensures that lawful internet pharmacies can continue to offer affordable prescription drugs free of Federal harassment.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I reiterate my support for H. Res. 874 and my hope that Congress will continue to show its appreciation for America's seniors by voting on my Senior Citizens' Improved Quality of Life Act before adjourning for the year.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 874, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read: ''A Resolution recognizing and honoring older Americans.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING EFFORTS OF STATE OF NEW YORK TO DEVELOP NATIONAL PURPLE HEART HALL OF HONOR

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 419) recognizing and supporting the efforts of the State of New York to develop the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 419

Whereas George Washington, at his headquarters in Newburgh, New York, on August 7, 1782, devised a Badge of Military Merit to be given to enlisted men and noncommissioned officers for meritorious action;

Whereas the Badge of Military Merit became popularly known as the ''Purple Heart'' because it consisted of the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding and was affixed to the uniform coat over the left breast;

Whereas Badges of Military Merit were awarded during the Revolutionary War by General George Washington at his headquarters, in Newburgh, New York, on May 3 and June 8, 1783;

Whereas the Badge of Military Merit, an award for military merit in the Revolutionary War, is the inspiration for today's Purple Heart medal;

Whereas on the bicentennial of General Washington's birthday in February 1932, the Badge of Military Merit was redesignated by General Douglas MacArthur, then Chief of Staff of the Army, as the Purple Heart, to be awarded to persons killed or wounded in action against an enemy of the United States;

Whereas more than 800,000 members of the Armed Forces have been awarded the Purple Heart;

Whereas the State of New York has dedicated substantial resources to the creation of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor to be constructed at the New Windsor Cantonment, a New York State Historic Site, in New Windsor, New York, to honor those individuals who have been awarded the Purple Heart and to inform and educate the people of the United States about the history and importance of that distinguished combat award;

Whereas the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor will be a permanent place of remembrance of the service and sacrifices made by the members of the Armed Forces wounded or killed in service to America throughout the Nation's history, both at home and abroad; and

Whereas as the Nation continues to defend the American Way, there will be a need for a distinguished place to honor those who in the future are awarded the Purple Heart for their service and sacrifice: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) recognizes and supports the efforts of the State of New York to develop and maintain the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York, to honor those individuals who have been awarded the Purple Heart and to inform and educate the people of the United States about the history and importance of that distinguished combat award; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States as well as Federal departments and agencies to cooperate, assist, and participate in educating and informing individuals about the history and importance of the Purple Heart and about the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 419, recognizing and supporting the efforts of the State of New York to develop the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York.

Mr. Speaker, let me first take just a moment to thank my colleague and good friend, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), and the State of New York for establishing a place for Americans to come and honor those men and women of our military who have sacrificed so much for America. They are the individuals who fight for us, who sweat for us, who bleed for us, and, sadly and unfortunately, sometimes who die for us.

The Purple Heart is a unique symbol that recognizes the sacrifices made by the men and women of the Armed Forces, sacrifices made for the freedoms this great country offers, freedoms not just for themselves, but for future generations of Americans.

It is only fitting that we have a place such as the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor to honor those men and women so that future generations can go there and learn about those fine young Americans who have ensured that we can all live free.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. SKELTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 419, which recognizes the efforts of the State of New York to establish the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

And, I recognize the gentlewoman from New York, Mrs. SUE KELLY, the sponsor of this measure for her efforts. One might wonder why the state of New York is leading the effort to establish a center that focuses on the history and importance of this honored military award. The reason is simple, in the summer of 1782, during the Revolutionary War; General George Washington devised two new badges, one of which was the Badge of Military Merit, which we know today as the Purple Heart.

General Washington at the time wrote ". . . whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth, or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding." Three soldiers are known to have received the original honor badge, Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the 2nd Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Line, Sergeant William Brown of the 5th Connectivity Regiment of the Continental Line, and Sergeant Elijah Churchill of the 2nd Continental Dragoons, also a Connecticut regiment. However, after the Revolution, the award feels into disuse and was not proposed for use again until after World War I.

In 1927, Army Chief of Staff General Charles P. Summerall directed that proposed legislation be sent to Congress to revive the Badge of Military Merit. However, it was not until 1931, when General Summerall's successor, General Douglas MacArthur pushed forward the idea to reinstitute the badge. It was on the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, February 22, 1932, that the War Department announced General Order No. 3, which established the Purple Heart.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt extended the award to the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and established a uniform application of standards in the Army and Navy. President Harry S. Truman retroactively extended the eligibility for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard back to April 5, 1917, and in 1962, President John F. Kennedy extended eligibility to any "civilian national of the United States, who while serving under competent authority in any capacity with an armed force . . ., has been, or may hereafter be, wounded" to qualify for the Purple Heart.

Mr. Speaker, the Purple Heart has an illustrious career and it is recognition of the enemy-related injuries a service member sustains. Today, there are more than 800,000 members of the Armed Forces who have been awarded the Purple Heart. The State of New York has been working to establish a National Purple Heart Hall of Honor at the New Windsor Cantonment in New Windsor, New York to provide a permanent place of remembrance of the service and sacrifices made by men and women in uniform throughout our nation's history. This resolution before us recognizes the efforts of the State of New York, and encourages the education and information on the history and importance of this distinguished combat award.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY).

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to encourage my colleagues to join me in honoring the extraordinary sacrifices made by American's veterans by voting "yes" on H. Con. Res 419.

This resolution supports the establishment of a National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in the birthplace of the Purple Heart in New Windsor, New York. The Purple Heart is the oldest and one of the most prestigious honors bestowed upon an American soldier. By passing this legislation today, we recognize the sacrifices of the brave men and women who have received this honor.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor will uniquely highlight the stories of the Purple Heart veterans. Every Purple Heart veteran is a hero whose story needs to be hold. By hearing these stories we can fully honor their sacrifices and learn from their experiences. The stories will echo within the halls of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, and they should inspire our Nation not only to preserve the legacy of our military heroes, but to better appreciate the freedoms for which they fought.

The Hall of Honor is scheduled to be officially dedicated November 10. It will be located at New Windsor Cantonment, the site in my congressional district. This is the site of the last encampment of the Continental Army, where General George Washington first presented the Badge of Military Merit in 1782. Since then more than 800,000 members of the Armed Forces have been awarded this medal, which is now called the Purple Heart. It is an honor reserved for those soldiers who are wounded or killed while defending the greatest of our principles, freedom.

New York State has done a great deal to make the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor a reality. Governor George Pataki and Bernadette Castro, our State's park and recreation preservation commissioner, led the effort. Our State's senator, Senator Bill Larkin, a retired lieutenant colonel with 23 years of Active Duty in the United States Army, has been a true champion in working on siting the Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor.

I am also grateful for the efforts of the military personnel subcommittee chairman, JOHN MCHUGH of New York, who helped bring this legislation to the floor today.

I want to thank especially Rick Weeks, the State commander of the New York Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The Military Order contributed $500,000 toward the construction of the Hall of Honor.

I will insert this letter of support from the National Military Order of the Purple Heart in the RECORD.

Commander Weeks was also instrumental in gathering support for this resolution. I thank him very much.

While the Hall of Honor is in New York, it is important to remember it is a national institution that will celebrate the sacrifices of soldiers and veterans who have lived in all areas of our country. Passage of this resolution today, as our troops are courageously fighting overseas to defend and preserve democracy, will send a strong message to our Armed Forces and our veterans that our Nation is grateful and continues to be grateful for the sacrifices made by our military men and women.

MILITARY ORDER OF
THE PURPLE HEART,
Springfield, VA, August 1, 2006.

Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER,
House Armed Services Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) is in total support of H. Con. Res. 419, which has been referred to your committee. This resolution recognizes and encourages support for the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. This Hall of Honor, while located in New York, is really a national effort and one that will recognize and honor all our country's men and women who have been recipients of the Purple Heart Medal for their death or wounds received in combat.

MOPH urges you and your colleagues on the committee to support this very worthwhile endeavor in a timely manner.

Respectfully,

JAMES D. RANDLES,
National Commander.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I fully endorse, and I know Members in this Chamber do, the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 419, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res 419, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Concurrent Resolution 210, by the yeas and nays;

House Resolution 622, by the yeas and nays;

House Concurrent Resolution 415, by the yeas and nays.

The first and third electronic votes will be conducted as 15-minute votes. The second vote in the series will be a 5-minute vote.

SUPPORTING THE GOAL OF ELIMINATING SUFFERING AND DEATH DUE TO CANCER BY THE YEAR 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 210, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 210, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 403, nays 0, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 451]

YEAS—403

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris Rodgers
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns

Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—29

Beauprez
Brown (OH)
Burton (IN)
Capuano
Case
Crowley
Davis (FL)
DeGette
Dingell
Evans
Ford
Gilchrest
Green (WI)
Gutierrez
Harris
Hyde
Jefferson
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Lynch
McGovern
Miller (NC)
Moore (KS)
Ney
Nussle
Oxley
Sanders
Strickland

□ 1902

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 622, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 0, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 452]

YEAS—402

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris Rodgers
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—30

Beauprez
Brown (OH)
Burton (IN)
Capuano
Case
Crowley
Davis (FL)
DeGette
Dingell
Evans
Ford
Gilchrest
Green (WI)
Gutierrez
Harris
Hyde
Jefferson
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Lynch
McGovern
Miller (NC)
Moore (KS)
Murtha
Ney
Nussle
Oxley
Sanders
Strickland

□ 1913

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING THE REPRESSION OF THE IRANIAN BAHA'I COMMUNITY AND CALLING FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF IRANIAN BAHA'IS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res 415.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 415 on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 2, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 453]

YEAS—393

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel

English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris Rodgers
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—2

Kucinich
Paul

NOT VOTING—37

Allen
Beauprez
Brown (OH)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Capuano
Case
Cole (OK)
Crowley
Davis (FL)
DeGette
Dingell
Evans
Flake
Ford
Gilchrest
Granger
Green (WI)
Gutierrez
Harris
Hyde
Jefferson
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Lynch
Marchant
McGovern
Miller (NC)
Moore (KS)
Murtha
Ney
Nussle
Oxley
Sanders
Strickland

□ 1930

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from Washington on Tuesday, September 19, 2006. As a result, I was not recorded for rollcall votes Nos. 451, 452, and 453. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall Nos. 451, 452, and 453.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE SHELLEY BERKLEY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable SHELLEY BERKLEY, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2006.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

SHELLEY BERKLEY,
Member of Congress.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 65

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 65.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4844, FEDERAL ELECTION INTEGRITY ACT OF 2006

Mrs. CAPITO, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–670) on the resolution (H. Res. 1015) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4844) to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SECURE BORDERS

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, this week we will consider legislation that the American people have made clear must be addressed to solve the illegal immigration crisis in our country. For too long, the security and well-being of our Nation has been compromised by open and porous borders.

After months of field hearings and listening to our constituents' concerns, it is clear that Americans from Savannah to Seattle and from San Diego to Syracuse demand tighter border security and stronger immigration laws. Last week, we passed the Secure Fence Act to tackle the problem of illegal aliens coming across the border, and three bills will be brought to the floor this week to ensure that our law enforcement agencies have the tools needed to further deal with this crisis. I call on all of my colleagues here and in the Senate to pass these critical pieces of legislation.

Madam Speaker, no longer can we allow an attitude of indifference toward the sovereignty of our borders. We should pass these bills and speak loudly to those wishing to break our laws that their actions will no longer be tolerated by the United States.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the Iraq war is doing badly, and the President would like the American people to think about something else. With less than 2 months until the midterm elections, the Republicans suddenly fear the democracy they claim to be spreading.

A commentary in today's Asia Times sums it up. The article is entitled,

''Iraq, Trying to Spin the Unspinnable.''

Let me briefly quote from it:

''The power of spin is not infinite; however, as the administration is now discovering, bad news has cascaded out of Iraq at such an astonishing pace that it defies credulity to suggest that the war has not drastically worsened the lives of Iraqis.''

American soldiers have been fighting and dying in Iraq for years to prop up the same flawed and failed policy by the President who cannot win the war, cannot win the peace, and cannot lead the United States out of harm's way.

The President says stay the course, and Republicans in the Congress refuse to say or do anything independent of the President. No oversight, just blind allegiance. The number of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq stands at 2,678. Every day in Iraq, on average of two more soldiers die. The number of U.S. soldiers injured in Iraq recently passed another grim statistic, 20,000 physical injuries. Every day in Iraq, 19 U.S. soldiers on average are injured as they try to survive in the middle of a civil war. And we have not yet begun to count the number of U.S. psychological casualties, the soldiers with PTSD. That could be another 20,000 to 30,000 from PTSD alone.

But nothing will change as long as the President has a Republican Congress rubber-stamping his vision. Even Iraqi leaders and parliament get it. Just yesterday, Abdel al-Anisi, a member of the largest party in Maliki's government said, ''We have to determine the nature of our relationship with the Multinational Forces in Iraq, which is to support the role of the government, not to take over its role.''

We are seen as occupiers in Iraq trying to control their oil and trying to dictate their policies, and our presence provokes more violence.

The President would like you to believe that terrorism is a new threat in a new century. The only new thing about the latest threat is how the President has mismanaged our response. Had Republicans in Congress provided any Iraq oversight, the truth would have emerged and we would have changed the course.

But the Republican congressional leaders demand acquiescence by their members, so the President's flawed war just keeps getting worse.

Throughout history, nations in the East and nations in the West have faced the threat of terrorism. A new book entitled, ''What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat,'' by Louise Richardson, ought to be required reading for Republicans. The author analyzes history to show us that terrorists want three Rs: revenge, renown, and reaction. She doesn't stop there. The second half of the book is called ''The Counter-Terrorists.''

Armed with understanding, not rhetoric, not ideology, the author provides insights into successfully dealing with the terrorists. If only our President would listen. If only Republicans in Congress would demand the President stop the rhetoric and face the reality. But that can't happen as long as the special interests receive special treatment by the Republicans.

Another new book, ''Imperial Life in the Emerald City,'' by a Washington Post reporter, offers a sobering assessment of the extent to which favors meant more than credentials in Iraq.

I submit for printing in the RECORD a story published yesterday in the Christian Science Monitor entitled, ''Mistakes Made by U.S. in Staffing Iraq? The new book alleges it wasn't what but who you knew that determined who got the key jobs.''

As the newspaper story recounts, before anyone could go to Iraq, they were vetted by a Republican political appointee and his staff in the Pentagon who, quoted here, posed blunt questions to some candidates about domestic politics: Did you vote for George Bush in 2000? Do you support the way the President is fighting the war on terror? Two people who sought jobs with the U.S. occupation said they were even asked about Rowe v. Wade. The President sent a 24-year-old over there to open the stock market. That is how the President is running the Iraq war.

The congressional Republicans are doing just as they are ordered. Over the next 7 weeks, the Republicans will offer the American people endless rhetoric. But that will only produce endless casualties until we replace a Republican Congress that merely takes orders. We have to have a Democratic Congress that is willing to provide oversight on what this President is doing. Election is about 50 days away, Mr. President.

[From the Christian Science Monitor, Sept. 19, 2006]

MISTAKES MADE BY US IN STAFFING IRAQ?

NEW BOOK ALLEGES IT WASN'T WHAT, BUT WHO, YOU KNEW THAT DETERMINED KEY JOBS

(By Tom Regan)

In the early days after the fall of Baghdad in 2003, many Americans both inside and outside the government indicated a desire to go to Iraq to help with the war effort. But a new book by Washington Post reporter Rajiv Chandrasekaran, ''Imperial Life in the Emerald City,'' argues that ties to the Bush administration or to the Republican Party regularly trumped years of experience or knowledge in a particular field when key jobs were being assigned.

The result, Mr. Chandrasekaran writes, is that under the leadership of L. Paul Bremer, the first administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, many inexperienced or unqualified people were given key posts in the rebuilding of Iraq, and often found themselves in situations they could not handle.

Before anyone could go to Baghdad, Chandrasekaran (who had spent six months in Iraq before the war started in March 2003, and then was the Post's Baghdad bureau chief from April 2003 to October 2004) reports, they first had to go through the office of Jim O'Beirne in the Pentagon.

To pass muster with O'Beirne, a political appointee who screens prospective political appointees for Defense Department posts, applicants didn't need to be experts in the Middle East or in post-conflict reconstruction. What seemed most important was loyalty to the Bush administration.

O'Beirne's staff posed blunt questions to some candidates about domestic politics: Did you vote for George W. Bush in 2000? Do you support the way the president is fighting the war on terror? Two people who sought jobs with the US occupation authority said they were even asked their views on Roe v. Wade.

The result, Chandrasekaran says, was that officials in many key areas, ''lacked vital skills and experience.'' Many people involved in the effort to rebuild and stabilize Iraq now see this decision making process as ''one of the Bush administration's gravest errors.''

''We didn't tap—and it should have started from the White House on down—just didn't tap the right people to do this job,'' said Frederick Smith, who served as the deputy director of the CPA's Washington office. ''It was a tough, tough job. Instead we got people who went out there because of their political leanings . . .''

One former CPA employee who had an office near O'Beirne's wrote an e-mail to a friend describing the recruitment process: ''I watched résumés of immensely talented individuals who had sought out CPA to help the country thrown in the trash because their adherence to 'the President's vision for Iraq' (a frequently heard phrase at CPA) was 'uncertain.' I saw senior civil servants from agencies like Treasury, Energy . . . and Commerce denied advisory positions in Baghdad that were instead handed to prominent RNC (Republican National Committee) contributors.''

In a review of the book in The Washington Post, Moses Naim, editor in chief of Foreign Policy magazine, writes that while common wisdom holds that ''the decision to invade Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein is still open to debate, American mismanagement of the country after the invasion is not.''

What caused the massive collapse of common sense that doomed the CPA and undermined the US gamble in Iraq? That is the question that every page tacitly forces on the reader. American ingenuity, pragmatism and practical approaches to problem-solving are legendary. But Chandrasekaran shows that what reigned in Iraq was massive incompetence, patently unfeasible schemes, naive expectations and arrogance fueled by ignorance. His book methodically documents the baffling ineptitude that dominated US attempts to influence Iraq's fiendish politics, rebuild the electrical grid, privatize the economy, run the oil industry, recruit expert staff or instill a modicum of normalcy to the lives of Iraqis. Nor are the book's complaints Monday-morning quarterbacking. The CPA's failings caused widespread grumbling at the time. Chandrasekaran tells of a message board on which some Marines had drawn a gravestone inscribed with the words ''COMMON SENSE.'' The caption underneath it read: ''Killed by the CPA.''

But writer, blogger and Republican consultant Rich Galen, who was in Baghdad around the same time as Chandrasekaran, writes at the Townhall.org site that many of the portraits of CPA officials and personnel in the book are ''appallingly unfair.'' The obvious implication being, while coalition military personnel were in constant danger of being injured or killed by ambush or IED, the ''naive neocons'' of the CPA were lounging about in perfect luxurious safety, eating dates and pomegranates, sipping fine wines and taking an occasional refreshing dip in the ''resort-sized swimming pool'' . . .

The vast majority of CPA employees lived in trailers (two people per half, shared bathroom, running water a pleasant surprise), ate in the cafeteria (food by Kellogg, Brown & Root a subsidiary of Halliburton); worked in crowded, dusty outdated offices (even by

Saddam standards); and went out into the Red Zone of Baghdad to do their jobs each and every day.

LANCE CORPORAL RYAN ADAM MILLER—TEXAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, to be a police officer or a member of the United States military is a gift, a sacrifice; and it is an honor. The uniform they wear is a commitment to protecting society, guarding the weak, giving back to the community, and fighting the forces of evil. Every day, they risk their lives, and tonight I want to talk about one of these of the rare breed.

Ryan Adam Miller from Pearland, Texas, and 19 years of age, was a third generation marine. His grandfather was a marine in the great World War II. His father Frank was a marine in Vietnam. Ryan was so committed to a future defending others, he graduated from high school early just so he could enlist into the United States Marine Corps and follow in the footsteps of Dad and Granddad, those who came before him.

While Ryan loved the Corps, his dream didn't end with service to his country. He has another wish, another sacrifice he wanted to make. He wanted to finish his military career in the Marine Corps and join another force, the very same police force both his mother and father gave decades of their lives to.

Both Ryan's parents served for years in the Houston Police Department. I know both of them because of my experience as a prosecutor and as a judge. At the last Houston Police Department cadet graduation this summer, I spoke to Ryan's mother Jeannie, who told me her son was coming back to Houston after he finished his tour of duty in Iraq to be a Houston police officer. This dream was almost a reality. Ryan even had planned to wear his mother's badge once he returned home for good.

With two parents who were dedicated law officers, Ryan knew the tough, rugged life that lay ahead. He also knew the joys that came with the job. Both his parents instilled in Ryan community pride, dedication, and passion to serve others. Ryan Adam Miller's goals, commitment, and faith are proof of that.

His mother recalls speaking to him last week when he talked of the fear that battle brings. He told her that he was praying, and God took away the fear of battle. One of Ryan's last acts was to give that peace to his parents, leaving them with the comfort that God would take care of him.

Sadly, he was just days away from returning home when, on September 14, this young marine 5 days ago was killed on patrol by an IED during combat operations against enemy forces in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

A loss not only for his family and our country, but our community back home in Texas. In these dark days of mourning, many people are no doubt trying to muster an encouraging word to comfort his parents. But it is their fellow police officers who have the most powerful and comforting thing to say. They say to him, they say to his parents, these officers in blue, ''He would have made a fine police officer.''

Ryan Miller was a fine marine. He was a fine human being, and today as a Member of the United States House of Representatives, I send my best to the Miller family and give them America's support as they fight their own battle over his death.

His death was not a loss, because he gave his life over there for all of us over here. Today we honor Ryan, we honor the parents of this marine and their sacrifices. I also pause today to remember the marines who served with Ryan, and all those who volunteered to defend and protect this great country. They are the fabric of this great Nation.

While the blood of their fellow comrades is the red color in the stripes of Old Glory, these few, these proud, these marines, keep us free to see the stars, stars of liberty, freedom and justice. So Semper Fi, Lance Corporal Ryan Adam Miller, Semper Fi, and God bless these sons of America.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1945

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MORE TROUBLE FOR AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, the latest trade report out of Washington spells more trouble for working families; most immediately for Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, and our Nation's heartland, but, in fact, for our entire Nation.

The U.S. Department of Commerce reported this week that America's trade deficit in the second quarter of this year hit its second highest level in history, rising 2.4 percent to $218.4 billion more imports into our Nation than exports out. That is just in one quarter.

We are well on our way to another record trade deficit likely to exceed $800 billion. At this rate, the United States might well post its first trillion-dollar trade deficit this year.

That level of trade deficit throttles real growth in our country and continues the unfortunate path of selling out America. We are not winning the global trade war, we are losing it badly. President Bush's trade policy is no more successful than his foreign policy. Since President Bush took office, we have lost 3 million more good jobs. America's trade deficit in motor vehicles alone has climbed by approximately 20 percent, and the recent announcement by Ford Motor Company of production cutbacks and plant closings will only exacerbate the situation.

Still, the administration clings to the same failed policies. The President will not even meet with the executives of the Big Three. I never thought I would see a day that the President of the United States refused to meet with the leaders of America's automakers. No industrial nation can afford to cash out its domestic automotive industry. One of five jobs here in our country are directly tied to it. But it is true. Apparently that is what this President thinks of the industry that has been the backbone of our economy.

Back in 1975, New York City was in dire fiscal straits, and Gerald Ford refused to help. The New York Daily News ran a famous headline: ''Ford to City: Drop Dead.'' Maybe it is just a matter of time before we see a similar headline about George W. Bush and his lack of concern about the U.S. automotive industry.

The same Commerce Department report showed other statistics which showed the deterioration in our Nation's financial picture. Foreign-owned assets in the United States increased by $366 billion more during the second quarter. U.S. liabilities to foreigners reported to U.S. banks increased by $84.2 billion more in the second quarter following an increase of $148.9 billion in the first quarter.

Who owns the assets of our Nation? Increasingly, foreign interests own our assets, and we owe them money. No wonder people think our country is headed in the wrong direction. It is.

Increasingly, Americans don't own America. Transactions in U.S. Treasury securities shifted to net foreign purchases of $10.1 billion in the second quarter, almost double the rate in the first quarter. I don't like the fact that foreign interests are buying our country. Indeed, I detest what is happening as un-American and unpatriotic. But foreign official assets in the United States increased $74.9 billion in the second quarter following an increase of $75.7 billion in the first quarter. It came as no surprise as a result that our dollar depreciated an additional 3 percent.

What the trade deficit means in real-life terms is that money, usually U.S. currency, is leaving American hands and ending up in the hands of foreign competitors, from the United States to Saudi Arabia and other major oil producers; from the United States to China, now the second largest holder of

U.S. dollar assets; from the United States to Japan, Korea and other major automobile and truck makers who keep their markets closed. So we are left with padlocked factories, a shrinking middle class, diminishing tax bases and all the problems that accompany a shortage of good jobs.

What a shame. What a shame that Washington is so out of touch with the real America. People are rapidly losing hope and trust. They believe their government has been captured by special interests and no longer cares about them, and they are right.

When they see these statistics about what is happening to our country, it is no wonder people are beginning to despair. So our people vote less, they become more cynical, and they conclude their government no longer stands up for them or indeed belongs to them. That, my friends, is a recipe for a rising political radicalism across our Nation. I cannot predict when it will happen, but it will happen.

SUPPORT OF U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, the men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol are often exposed to high-risk situations and dangerous environments while working on our southern border. Often working alone in remote areas and rugged landscapes, U.S. Border Patrol agents routinely encounter heavily armed human drug traffickers. Despite these dangerous conditions, the men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol work tirelessly to protect our Nation's borders, and they deserve the utmost praise for their dedication and bravery.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, two U.S. Border Patrol agents who deserve our appreciation have instead become victims of a grave injustice. Agents Ramos and Compean were found guilty in a Federal court for wounding a drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our southern borders into Texas. The agents now face up to 20 years in Federal prison.

Agent Ramos served the Border Patrol for 9 years and was a former nominee for Border Patrol Agent of the Year. Agent Compean had 5 years of experience as a Border Patrol agent. These agents never should have been prosecuted for their actions last year.

By attempting to apprehend a Mexican drug smuggler, these agents were simply doing their job to protect the American people. These agents should have been commended for their actions. But instead, the U.S. Attorney's Office prosecuted the agents and granted full immunity to the drug smuggler. Granted full immunity to the drug smuggler for his testimony against our agents.

The drug smuggler received full medical care in El Paso, Texas, was permitted to return to Mexico, and is now suing the Border Patrol for $5 million for violating his civil rights. I want to repeat that, Madam Speaker. The drug smuggler received full medical care in El Paso, Texas, was permitted to return to Mexico, and is now suing the Border Patrol for $5 million for violating his civil rights. He is not even an American citizen. He is a criminal.

Madam Speaker, I have spoken to numerous people inside Texas and outside of Texas regarding this outrage, including the attorney for one of these agents. I have written to the President of the United States asking him to please look into this matter. I have written two letters to Attorney General Gonzales asking him to reopen this case for a fuller investigation before these men are sentenced in October.

I hope that the American people will agree that this prosecution is an outrageous injustice and that the situation must be investigated.

Madam Speaker, I am going to close in 1 second, but I will tell you I have had the opportunity to talk to these gentlemen, and I will tell you they are fine Hispanic Americans. They are citizens of this great Nation, and they love America. They, like their fellow Border Patrol agents, have a very difficult and tough job, and I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will ask the same question that I am asking: Why and how is it that these Border Patrol agents were doing their job to apprehend a drug smuggler, and yet they are the ones who have been prosecuted, and on October 18 they will be sentenced?

I think this is an injustice, and we are asking for an investigation. I know that Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee has joined us in this effort. I hope that we will look into this because these men and women who serve us on the border deserve our protection. I thank those who serve. God bless America.

STOP THE GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, after more than 3 violent years, the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan is getting worse. As Jan Egeland, Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs at the U.N., has said, the coming weeks could see ''a man-made catastrophe of an unprecedented scale.''

At the end of this month, African Union forces are set to leave Darfur. Currently the only peacekeeping forces in Darfur, the departure of these troops will only embolden the Sudanese Government and the allied Janjaweed militias to continue to murder and displace Sudanese citizens.

As my colleagues know, the crisis in Darfur began in February 2003 when two rebel groups emerged to challenge the National Islamic Front government in Darfur. Since then, over 400,000 people have died, and nearly 2.5 million have been displaced from their homes. Sadly, it took the United States until July 2004 to recognize that these events in Darfur constituted genocide, and we cannot continue this type of inaction. Far too many times we have seen the horrible consequences of ignoring genocide or failing to get involved quickly.

Madam Speaker, I was pleased to hear that President Bush has finally appointed Andrew Natsios as the special envoy to Sudan. I joined 88 of my colleagues in cosponsoring a resolution calling for the President to appoint such an envoy to demonstrate the United States' commitment to resolving the crisis. This special envoy to Sudan will ensure continuous high-level U.S. engagement in Darfur, and will work to deter a further escalation of violence and humanitarian disaster in the region.

But there is much more, however, that the administration should do to work towards a lasting peace in Darfur. As the most prominent democracy in the world, the U.S. must step forward and take a leadership role in stopping this genocide. Resolving this conflict and ending the violence should be a high priority for this Congress and for the Bush administration.

The United States must pressure Sudanese allies, particularly those in the Arab League, to ensure that the Sudanese Government agrees to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1706. This resolution calls for 22,500 U.N. troops and police officers to be sent into Darfur to bolster the peacekeeping mission.

So far Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has rejected the U.S. Security Council Resolution 1706 and thus rejected calls for U.N. peacekeeping troops to enter Darfur. But if the African Union peacekeepers leave at the end of September, and al-Bashir is successful in keeping U.N. forces out of the region, the situation in Darfur will spiral into a worsening tragedy.

The United States cannot in good conscience stand idly by as the horrors in Darfur approach 1 million deaths and 3 million displaced. Families are being destroyed, and people are being murdered. The U.S. and the U.N. have a moral obligation to stop this genocide so we can avoid the failures of Bosnia and Rwanda. Have we not learned anything from those mistakes?

The U.S. must work with NATO to impose a no-fly zone over Darfur to ensure military offensives and bombings are brought to an end. The Sudanese Government is escalating an air war by turning Soviet-era Antonov planes into makeshift bombers and using helicopter gunships against mud and thatch huts inhabited by many Sudanese people. We cannot allow these killings to continue, and establishing a no-fly zone will take a step in the right direction to lessen the violence in Darfur.

Madam Speaker, the Sudanese Government has improperly imprisoned

American reporters and killed aid workers to try to eliminate any international presence in the country. This kind of aggression must come to an end. If the international troops are forced out of Sudan, the country will spiral further into a land of violence and brutality.

Finally, the U.S. has a moral obligation to take all possible steps to end the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan. We have seen over and over what can happen if the international community does not intercede when people are being systematically murdered and displaced from their homes.

With the African Union forces planning to depart at the end of the month and the Sudanese Government rejecting U.N. peacekeeping forces, the time for full-scale international involvement is now.

□ 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EARLINE HEATH KING

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise today to honor Mrs. Earline Heath King of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for her exemplary artistic career.

Mrs. King is an internationally recognized sculptor whose work decorates private residences and public places around the world. I am honored to recognize a remarkable woman who at all stages of her life has boldly sought to inspire young minds, adorn public spaces, and share her talents so beautifully with others. At a time when many of us worry about regrets regarding a life foregone, Mrs. King discovered a means to express her creativity that continues to inspire both young and old today.

Born in 1913 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Mrs. King did not begin her sculpting career until she was 50 years old. However, while growing up, she discovered an early interest in the arts. She recalls drawing advertisements for her father, a local barber, by drawing ladies with the latest hairstyles. In addition, she found artistic inspiration in her mother's own handiwork of embroidery, knitting, and tatting.

However, Mrs. King's first serious interest in the arts began during her studies at R.J. Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem. After her initial evaluation, she was advised to major in art and music along with her academic curriculum. During this time, Mrs. King learned the basics of art by working in pen and ink, pastels, watercolor, and oils. While in these classes, Mrs. King met her high school sweetheart, Joe King. She recalls that he always came in first in the annual art contest and she usually came in second. Before the conclusion of their senior year, they were married.

Mrs. King was awarded a scholarship in music to Greensboro College the following year, while Joe finished school and worked at the Carolina Theater. The following year they traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit family and tour art museums. Mrs. King was so enthralled with the art opportunities that she applied at a top photography studio for a job as a colorist while she was there. That same day she was offered a job; so the couple quickly packed their belongings and headed for their new home in Washington.

While Mr. KING worked as a commercial artist, Mrs. King sewed and used needlepoint to create hats for friends and family in her little free time. Her hats were noticed by a local milliner, and he suggested that she travel to New York and study with a top milliner. Mrs. King was accepted at the Dache millinery and worked as a copier from nine to six. Each day she was given a hat and a bag filled with materials and required to ''copy'' the original. She later became a fitter, fitting hats on celebrities such as Greta Garbo, Mary Pickford, and Loretta Young.

During the summer of 1946, Mr. and Mrs. King returned to Winston-Salem. There Mr. KING set up his first professional studio in the old blacksmith's shop of Reynolda Plantation with the help of John Whitaker, the president of Reynolds Tobacco Company. Within a month Mr. and Mrs. King opened a studio that would remain open for the next 50 years.

It was in the latter stages of these years that Mrs. King first grew interested in sculpture. In the mid-1960s, Mrs. King began her studies with Gardner Gidley of Winston-Salem. When first approached by a friend who asked her to attend the sculpture course, Earline hesitantly replied, thanks but no thanks, believing that she had neither the time nor the talent to take the course. According to Earline, when the opportunity presented itself, she went kicking and screaming, but she went. Her studies continued with Bruno Luchesi of New York; followed by Livia Papini of Florence, Italy; and, finally, George Lundeen of Scottsdale, Arizona.

In 1979 she unveiled her first public work, a bronze equestrian monument of Richard Joshua Reynolds, founder of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. She has since completed more than 300 portrait commissions including portraitures of Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.; Sir Winston Churchill at the Worrell House in London, England; Dr. Armand Hammer of the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California; and Dr. Camillo Artom of Casa Artom in Venice, Italy.

Her public commissions include: the AirCare memorial for Bowman Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem; pieces for the Denver Center for the Performing Arts in Denver, Colorado, Winthrop College in Rock Hill, South Carolina; and works for The Gallery for the Blind at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh.

Earline's contributions to the art world expand beyond her own commissioned work. Along with five other painters and sculptors, she opened a gallery over 30 years ago in Winston-Salem called Art Gallery Originals. At their gallery in Reynolda Village, Earline still provides a workshop once a year where emerging artists and novice artists can exhibit their creations. In 1993 Earline was honored with a show in the Luigi Bellini Gallery in Florence, Italy, highlighting the extensive works of her career. She was the very first woman sculptor to be exhibited by the gallery. The show was a tremendous success and was attended by both fellow Americans living in Italy and by the diplomatic community.

Her passion for the arts is evident as much today as ever. Mrs. King is now in her 42nd year of sculpture creation, and her artistic fervor and creativity amazes me. The fact that at 50 years of age Mrs. King discovered sculpture and made it her life is truly an inspiration.

Most recently, Mrs. King sculpted the late President Ronald Reagan for the opening of a new Winston-Salem high school named after the President. She continues to work in a variety of media such as terra cotta, polycast, cold cast bronze, and lost wax bronze casting. Each year Mrs. King introduces hundreds of young minds to the inspiring world of creativity through the tutelage of yearly workshops in different communities of North Carolina. Earline's artworks continues to find homes in galleries, public buildings, and private residences of prominent collectors throughout the United States and Europe. Her artwork can be viewed in Midtown, Trotman, and ERL galleries in Winston-Salem; the Tyler White Art Gallery in Greensboro; and Curzon Gallery in Boca Raton, Florida.

Mrs. King's artistic career is one of tremendous inspiration and talent. Her career is marked by a true love for the arts and for creation. I believe that there are few people in life who truly find a passion that keeps them inspired and creating. I believe that Earline Heath King has truly discovered that passion in her life through her art, and I applaud her for the beauty that she has given us all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, this Thursday, September 21, is the International Day of Peace, as established by the United Nations a quarter century ago. To recognize it, a coalition of peace and religious organizations are mobilizing thousands upon thousands of people around the country in a week's worth of marches, vigils, and rallies. Their goal: an end to the Iraq occupation and the safe return of our troops back home to the United States.

I have signed their Declaration of Peace Congressional Pledge, and I strongly urge my colleagues to do the same. In addition to troop withdrawal, the pledge calls for important post-occupation steps that I and many of my colleagues have been pushing for some time now: among other things, no permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq; a reconciliation process led by the Iraqis which may include an international peacekeeping presence; Iraqi control over its internal affairs and its rich oil supply; increased support for veterans of the Iraq conflict; the establishment of a peace dividend with the money being spent on occupying Iraq being reinvested in our people so they will have more jobs, stronger schools, better housing, and more efficient and affordable health care.

So how is the Bush administration celebrating International Peace Day? By promising us a semipermanent state of war, an open-ended occupation of Iraq. General Abizaid said today that we will maintain our current troop levels for at least the next 9 months. There you have it. The ultimate expression of ''stay the course.'' So much for last year's predictions by General Casey and others that there would be a significant drawdown in the year 2006.

Keeping 147,000 American soldiers as occupation forces in Iraq through the middle of next year and beyond, what will that mean? It will mean more American casualties. It will mean billions more of the people's dollars sunk in a failed policy. It will mean Iraq will become an even more fertile terrorist training ground. It will mean more violence and venom directed toward Americans by radical jihadists. It will mean that the sectarian strife, the civil war in Iraq will continue unabated.

If that is not bad enough, there is convincing evidence that our finger is on the trigger when it comes to launching a strike against Iran. Retired Air Force Colonel Sam Gardner, who has taught at the Army's National War College, said on CNN yesterday that ''we are conducting military operations inside Iran right now. The evidence is overwhelming.''

Mr. Speaker, there has to be a better way to manage global conflict. Actually, as he so often did, Martin Luther King, Jr. put it best. He said: ''The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.''

He continued: ''The chain reaction . . . hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars, must be broken or we shall be plunged into a dark a business.''

Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to go beyond ending the occupation of Iraq to an entirely new national security paradigm, one that emphasizes diplomacy, multilateralism, strong intelligence, containment strategies, weapons inspections, real democracy building, and humanitarian aid. But we must avoid war, rather than making it our default national security strategy.

On this year's International Day of Peace, Mr. Speaker, let us rededicate ourselves to protect the country we love, not by relying on our basest impulses, but on the most honorable and humane of American values.

H.R. 5555, TRAUMA BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I would like to take a little time and speak about the state of our trauma system here in the United States.

I recently introduced a bill, H.R. 5555, the Trauma Care Systems Planning and Development Act of 2006. H.R. 5555 would provide grants to State trauma systems to improve the coordination of emergency departments and bolster the safety net from point of injury, transportation, to triage and treatment.

Mr. Speaker, traumatic injury is the leading cause of death in the United States for people under the age of 45. It is the third leading cause of death in the general American population, and each day more than 170,000 men, women, and children are injured severely enough to seek medical care. About 400 of these people will die and another 200 will sustain long-term disability as a result of their injuries. The total cost of traumatic injury in the United States is largely due to motor vehicle trauma, an estimated cost of $260 billion.

Experts estimate that many injury-related deaths could be prevented if a minimum standard of trauma care were available to all Americans. Many areas in the United States do not have appropriate emergency medical services. Several areas report large gaps in transportation coverage and lack of access to emergency nurses and doctors.

To illustrate this point, I have a map that shows the areas of the country where residents can reach a trauma center within 60 minutes by flying or driving. This map was created by the Trauma Resource Allocation Model for Ambulances and Hospitals, which is a computer model designed to aid State and regional planners in their decisions to locate or relocate designated trauma centers and helicopter pads. It is designed to help maximize access to life-saving trauma care for our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the blue areas are within 1-hour driving distance; the pink areas are within 1-hour flying distance. The 1-hour time limit is not arbitrary. In emergency medicine, the first hour after injury is referred to as the golden hour. Patients treated within this timespan are more likely to recover or have less long-term effects of their injury. The longer a person waits for treatment, the worse the outcome is likely to be.

Mr. Speaker, I represent an area of north Texas around the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex, and if you drive from Dallas to Los Angeles, you travel about half of that distance in Texas.

□ 2015

Well, that distance in Texas from the Dallas-Ft. Worth area to El Paso is a 10-hour trip. And you can easily make that trip and be outside the range of trauma service almost the entire time. That is a long drive with the potential for an accident throughout.

In fact, it would be possible to drive from Mexico to Canada and always be more than an hour away from a trauma center. Members might find that parts of their districts fall outside the 1-hour marker.

The Institute of Medicine recently put out a report in June of this year titled The Future of Emergency Care. They found four things. First, many emergency rooms and trauma centers are overcrowded. Demand is growing; supply is dwindling. Ambulances are often diverted from crowded hospitals to others that may be farther away, delaying treatment time and providing less optimal care. Patients end up boarded in the emergency room while they wait for a hospital room.

Secondly, emergency care is highly fragmented. Cities and regions are often served by multiple 9/11 call centers. Emergency medical services agencies do not coordinate with their emergency rooms and trauma centers. And some emergency rooms are overcrowded, while others remain nearly empty.

There is not effective communication between public safety agencies and public health departments. They often use different radio frequencies and have different emergency plans. Interoperability, which was a big issue during Katrina, is still an ongoing concern.

There is no nationwide standard for training and certification of emergency medical personnel, and Federal responsibility for oversight is scattered across multiple Federal agencies.

Thirdly, critical specialists are often unavailable to provide emergency trauma care. Three-quarters of hospitals report difficulty finding specialists to take emergency and trauma calls. Key specialties are in short supply. Specialists often treat emergency room patients without compensation. And there is extremely high medical liability.

Fourthly, the emergency system is ill-prepared to handle a major disaster. There is little surge capacity. The emergency medical services received only 4 percent of Department of Homeland Security first responder funding in 2002 and 2003. Emergency medical technicians in nonfire-based services have less than 1 hour of training in disaster response, and hospital and EMS personnel lack protective equipment to effectively respond to chemical, biological or nuclear threats.

In response to these four deficiencies, the Institute of Medicine made the following recommendations. One, create a coordinated, regionalized and accountable system. Two, create a lead agency. Three, end emergency department boarding and diversion. Fourthly, increase funding for emergency care. Fifthly, enhance emergency care research. And finally, promote the EMS workforce standards.

I have sought with the bill, H.R. 5555, the Trauma Care Systems Planning and Development Act, to address this issue. A coordinated and thoughtful plan must be applied to improve our trauma care system in this country.

Anyone or their family member could need trauma care in the blink of an eye. Wouldn't we all want to know that we are receiving the very best trauma care available quickly and efficiently?

□ 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SKELTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEMOCRATS AND THE BUDGET DEFICIT

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Permission to speak out of turn, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I have the honor of being the first of a series of Democratic speakers tonight about the budget. And my colleagues will talk in some detail about the deficit and the debt and its consequence on the country.

But, if I can, I want to begin with a memory of a 10-year-old child growing up in Montgomery, Alabama. I remember being 10 years old and listening to a very conservative radio commentator talking about the liberal government in Washington, D.C., spending too much money.

I remember hearing this very skilled radio commentator talk about the fact that amazingly the Government of the United States of America was running a $36 billion deficit, and that it might rise to $100 billion the next year.

And I remember hearing that very conservative radio commentator say: If we do not get our hands on our budget, if we do not figure out a way to restore fiscal discipline, there was no way that we can have a strong and solvent economy.

Well, that radio commentator was named Ronald Reagan. He would be elected to the Presidency 2 years later; would forget a lot of what he said. He ended up running up massive deficits during his own time in office.

I begin with that observation, Mr. Speaker, because for the next, what is it, 51 days between now and November 7, we will hear a lot of talk about which party can be trusted to better manage the money of the American people. We will hear a lot of talk in this 51 days about the danger of Democrats being fiscally reckless and irresponsible, and we will be told that all we will do is we will tax people too much, and we will spend too much.

And I looked in the paper today, Mr. Speaker. The President's approval ratings are rising, we are told, and they are rising for one reason. He has gone from a 70 percent approval rating among Republicans to 86 percent.

And when I read the various political reports that we are regularly favored with in this city, I read the Republican's strategy on November 7 hinges on one factor: bringing home the base. Bringing home those Republicans in Tennessee and Missouri and Ohio who drifted away, getting them to come back and to believe again.

So I want to direct my remarks, if I can, at the Republican base for a minute. I am not a member of it. We have got a lot of conservatives in Alabama, and I think I can speak to them. It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, I want them to know a few basic facts.

I want them to know that fiscal conservatism has changed its meaning in this city, and the government in which they put their votes and in which they put so much faith is now running up these massive deficits, and the Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors went before a group of Republican-leaning businessmen last week and said, you know what, it doesn't even matter. Deficits are just things that the statisticians worry about.

I want all of the conservative people who are listening tonight, again, many of whom are in my great State of Alabama, to know that, well, you may be a conservative, I bet you care about the security of your border. One of the reasons we cannot put enough money around enforcing border security is because of these debts and deficits your government is running up.

To all of the conservatives who are listening tonight, you may be a conservative, but I will bet you would love the see the veterans of this country given adequate health care. Well, the government that you value so much, the government to which you have given your votes the last several cycles cannot do it because they cannot afford it.

We had a debate on this floor, Mr. Speaker, just 1 year ago, September of 2005. The subject was whether we were going to provide full funding for health care for Guards and reservists. And our esteemed colleagues on the other side of the aisle rose in the Chamber and said, we just cannot afford it; it has got to be health care for veterans and reservists, or it has got to be helicopters. We cannot afford to do both. In part, that is because of the debt and the deficits that we have.

I want to say finally to these conservatives, Mr. Speaker, before you go back home so easily, before you go back to your base, understand what your party has become, a conservative party that says the debt does not matter, a conservative party that says that red ink is not important, and a conservative party that cannot find enough money to secure the border or provide benefits for veterans. It is enough to prevent you from going home. It is enough to make you look at an alternative.

Now, my colleagues will talk tonight, Mr. Speaker, about a lot of other lost opportunities. They will talk about the fact that if we could get our fiscal house in order, we could do all kinds of things that we thought we could do just a short time ago. You remember the debates, Mr. Speaker, when there was a $236 billion surplus. Republicans had ideas on what they could do. They talked about middle-class tax cuts instead of upper-end tax cuts. People on my side of the aisle talked about a refurbished commitment to veterans and the health care and education. We cannot debate any of those things right now because of this debt and these deficits.

So I end with that point. The conservatism that is on the ballot on November 7 is a conservatism of missed opportunities. It is a conservatism that has totally changed the notion of what it means to be fiscally responsible. It is a conservatism that is fading and failing for a reason.

I think a lot of people will come home on November 7, Mr. Speaker, but it will not be to a party that used to call itself conservative, it will be to common sense, it will be to a notion of reasonable sacrifice in this country, of shared sacrifice. And that is why I think the ranks will change so much on November 7.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WHAT THE CONSTITUTION SAYS

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago we paused to recognize Constitution Day. I thought it would be appropriate this evening if we spent a few moments looking at the Constitution.

But in order to really understand the milieu in which the Constitution was created, I think we need to go back 11 years before the Constitution was ratified to the Declaration of Independence. In there we read these words: We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.

Mr. Speaker, we mouth those words today, and then we move on to the next clause, and they mean so little to us compared to what they meant to our Founding Fathers. You see, most of our Founding Fathers came from countries in the British Isles and in Europe that were ruled by a king or an emperor who claimed, and incredibly was granted, divine rights. What that says is that the rights came from God to the king or the emperor, and he would give what rights he wished to the people.

And we made a stark departure from that. Fourscore and 7 years later, Abraham Lincoln was to note that this new experiment might not work. He said in his Gettysburg Address that: We are now engaged in a great war testing whether this Nation or any Nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It took 11 years for the promise of the Declaration of Independence to be fulfilled in the Constitution that was ratified in 1787. The ink was hardly dry on the Constitution before our Founding Fathers wondered if it really was clear that they meant to have a very limited Federal Government with essentially all of the rights belonging to the people.

And so they wrote 12 amendments; 10 of them made it through that process of two-thirds of the House, two-thirds of the Senate, and three-fourths of the State legislatures, and we know them as the Bill of Rights. I think we all too seldom review these Bill of Rights.

The first eight deal with pretty specific rights that the people have, like the right to worship as they please, and to speak freely, in the first amendment; the right to keep and bear arms, much misunderstood in the second amendment. And then third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eight all deal with specific rights of the people. And then the ninth amendment, seldom referred to, but they wanted to make sure that having enumerated certain rights as belonging to the people, that the reader of the Constitution and these amendments understood that essentially all of the rights belonged to the people.

Notice what they said in the ninth amendment. The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people. In other words, just because we did not mention a right in the Constitution or these amendments as belonging to the people, that is where essentially all of the rights belong. So do not disparage these rights to people. They do belong to the people.

And then the most violated amendment in the Constitution, the 10th amendment. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited to the States are reserved to the States respectively or to the people.

What this really says in plain everyday English, without the old English and the legalese, is if you cannot find it Article I, section 8, you cannot do it.

Now, we are doing a great many things in this Congress that neither I nor anyone else can find a sound basis for in the Constitution, and this is pretty widely recognized. As evidence of that, I have, and I think this was a joke from Jay Leno, that is one of the places that it was heard. ''They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq. Why don't we just give them ours? It was written by a lot of really smart guys, it has worked for over 200 years, and we are not using it any more.''

Mr. Speaker, this general recognition on the part of the citizenry that we are now largely ignoring the Constitution ought to cause us to rethink what we are doing.

I am not saying that the things that we are doing are not things that we ought to be doing. What I am saying is we ought not be ignoring the Constitution. This, I believe, starts us down a very slippery slope. If I can argue it is okay to do these things, like philanthropy, and, by the way, do a Google search for Davy Crockett and farmer, and you will get a great discussion of philanthropy, health care and education, I am not arguing that these are not things that the Federal Government might ought to be doing. I am simply arguing that if we are going to do them, we need to have amended the Constitution, because I am very concerned that if we can ignore the Constitution now, that we can ignore it in the future for some very important civil liberty that we have.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned that the general malaise on our part in referring to the specifics of the Constitution will serve us no good purpose in the future, and I think that we need to look at every law that we pass to make sure there is a firm basis in the Constitution.

This is a wonderful document. We have one person in 22. We have a fourth of all the good things in the world. I think it is because of the milieu that was established by this Constitution, the civil rights. No other constitution, no other bill of rights provides such civil liberties. To remain who we are, I think that we need to stick by our Constitution.

□ 2030

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEMOCRATS ARE PREPARED TO LEAD THE COUNTRY IN A NEW DIRECTION

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the budgets crafted by the Bush administration and the Republican majority do not address our national short-term or long-term objectives or the values of our Nation. It is time for a new direction.

To meet our Nation's goals of economic security for our families and security for our homeland, Democrats have offered a plan.

Democrats believe in paying down the debt and maintaining fiscal restraint and discipline.

Democrats believe in real investment in life-long education which enables every American to reach their potential and strengthens the long-term financial security of our families and our Nation.

Democrats believe in budgets that invest in our armed services to defend our homeland and to protect the men and women who defend us. Democrats believe in tax fairness and tax cuts for the middle class. We believe in helping Americans pay for college, buy their first home, find affordable health insurance, and save for retirement. We understand the priorities of everyday Americans.

The Republican budgets of the last 5 years have failed to meet each of these objectives. At a time when American families are facing stagnant wages and ever-increasing bills for child care, for health care, for college tuition and for

gas at the pump, the Republican Congress has failed to address these day-to-day concerns. Instead, they have enacted tax cuts for the very wealthy. My constituents want Congress to address their needs, not the wants and desires of a select few. It is clear which side the majority has chosen.

Instead of budgeting fairly, the Republicans have relied on smoke-and-mirror, borrow-and-spend gimmicks. They don't include the war in Iraq and the military activities in Afghanistan in their budget, they don't include the massive costs of repealing the estate tax for estates valued at $10 million or more, and they don't include the full cost of the Medicare part D prescription drug benefit. Despite these efforts to keep costs hidden, their budget schemes create new deficits every year and have added nearly $3.5 trillion to our national debt.

Mr. Speaker, American families deserve better and they deserve a new direction. Instead of making smart investments in America's future, the Republican budgets have run up massive deficits each year and have added to our national debt, so that as of now our national debt is nearly $8.5 trillion. This means that we spend more on interest payments on our debt than the combined Federal investments in education, homeland security, and veterans health care combined. The Nation's debt is unsustainable and it is immoral.

Mr. Speaker, American families deserve better. They deserve a new direction.

Mr. Speaker, the budget policies of the Bush administration and this Republican Congress leave our Nation less secure. Their schemes rely on borrowing more and more money from foreign investors. More money, mind you, than the amount borrowed by all past American Presidents combined.

And instead of enhancing our safety at home and bolstering our security abroad, the Republican Congress continues to underfund important security initiatives at our ports, chemical plants and along our borders, this at the same time they are failing to enact many of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, including enabling our police and firefighters to communicate seamlessly.

Mr. Speaker, American families expect the government to make the necessary investments to keep them safe, and they believe that the American Dream should be available to everyone, not a select few. They deserve a new direction.

Democrats understand that unless we change course, the harmful effects of the Republicans' borrow-and-spend budget policies will only continue.

Democrats have a plan that makes tough, fiscally disciplined choices, to restore our budget to balance and to meet our obligations to American families; Democrats have a plan that fulfills the basic budgetary principles of living within our means; and Democrats have a plan to reduce wasteful spending and make smart investments in all Americans that will ensure the Nation's current and future fiscal well-being and protect the safety, security and freedoms that make our Nation great.

Mr. Speaker, Americans work hard every day. My constituents work hard every day to meet their obligations to their families, to their communities and to their Nation. We must honor their commitment, and we should not and cannot walk away from our obligations to them.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats are committed to fiscal responsibility, the Democrats are committed to the future of our Nation, and the Democrats are prepared to lead the Nation in a new direction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUPPORT THE FEDERAL ELECTION INTEGRITY ACT

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Permission to speak out of turn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will take up the Federal Election Integrity Act. The Federal Election Integrity Act will ensure American elections of Americans, for Americans, and by Americans. This measure promotes fairness and simply assures compliance with U.S. law. All citizens in this country hold a stake in our electoral system, and we owe it to our constituents to crack down on voter fraud.

For these reasons, I have long supported photo ID requirements for voters in Georgia. In fact, Georgia enacted into law such a requirement in the past year. Nearly all voters already have a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license or a passport.

Georgia made photo IDs available to all citizens and offered them for free to those who could not afford the nominal fee. With these safeguards in place, it makes no sense to argue that photo ID requirements disenfranchise certain segments of our population.

Photo ID requirements actually protect the sanctity of every legal vote. The greatest threat to the constitutional right to vote is voter fraud. A legal voter whose ballot is canceled out by the ballot of an illegal voter has effectively been disenfranchised. We seek not to suppress the vote to promote the sanctity of the vote.

The Federal Election Integrity Act will require in the 2008 election that voters show a photo ID. In 2010 it will require that voters show a photo ID that could not be obtained without proof of citizenship. I have supported such efforts in the past, and I will support this bill.

Though I have acted consistently throughout my career in public service to promote fair and accurate election, I fear the House debate will be rife with irony. You see, just 2 months ago, this House voted by a lopsided margin to trample the equal protection clause of the Constitution and to violate the sovereignty of the State of Georgia by extending the Voting Rights Act for 25 years.

I joined several of my colleagues from Georgia on this floor to educate Members of the House on our State's tremendous progress on voter equity. We presented hard evidence that the Georgia of 2006 is far removed from the Georgia of 1964. We proved that Georgia is no different than any other State when it comes to voter equality.

After I defended the honor and integrity of my State, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee slurred my State's record. He entered into the RECORD a statement that said: ''The record since 1982 makes clear that Georgia and its political subdivisions have not progressed beyond the need for the temporary provisions of the Voting Rights Act.'' As evidence of ongoing problems in Georgia, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and others cited Georgia's photo identification law.

Now, the nearly 400 Members who voted to penalize Georgia should reflect on that vote. They need to ask themselves what changed between July and September of this year. Why was it bad in July to have a photo ID requirement for my home State of Georgia, but okay in September to have a photo ID requirement nationwide?

Make no mistake, I will be voting for the Federal Election Integrity Act. I only wish it went further, to make all sections of the Voting Rights Act applicable to all States and to make all ballots be in English only.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUPPORTING A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking the gentleman from Alabama for organizing this series of 5-minute statements and for his leadership on this issue.

Two weeks short of the end of the fiscal year of 2006 and with no budget in

place for fiscal 2007, I commend my distinguished Democratic colleagues on the Budget Committee for taking this time to call America's attention to the fiscal challenges resulting from the Republicans' misguided policies and the wrong choices they have made for our economy. Misplaced spending priorities and bad decisions have consequences. They are leading us further down the path to fiscal ruin and expanding the wedge between middle-class families and the superwealthy.

I am proud to join my colleagues to highlight the hypocrisy of the overriding Republican economic philosophy that extending dividends, capital gains and other tax cuts for millionaires and corporations create a rising tide that lifts all boats.

Five years after the President's $1.5 trillion tax cut, our national debt now approaches $10 trillion. If our tax cuts performed as promised by those across the aisle, an exploding economy would have wiped out this debt.

We have already proven that more needs to be done than just hope that sooner or later tax cuts will reach Americans who need help the most. But those who do need help must get in line and hope that the benefits of tax cuts for millionaires and corporations will ultimately trickle down to them.

Perhaps the expanding gulf between the haves and the almost-haves is best illustrated by the fact that wages and salaries now make up the lowest share of gross domestic product since the government began keeping records on that in 1947, while corporate profits continue to break all-time records. Meanwhile, the buying power of the minimum wage has sunk to its lowest level in 50 years.

What is missing are policies that ensure that the benefits of higher corporate earnings, productivity and globalization are widely shared, such as real government support for higher education, a progressive Tax Code and affordable health care.

When choices are made at the expense of our safety net, choices that benefit the top 1 percent who will never struggle to pay a mortgage, never struggle to keep up with gas prices, never struggle to put their children through school, it is clear that a new direction for our economy is long overdue.

How can the Republicans argue that this economy is bound in the right direction when our Nation is saddled with record-breaking deficits over 4 consecutive years, combined with deep and painful cuts to hospitals, to schools, and to security? At least the Republicans' budget outlook since 2001 has been consistent. Americans could bank on the American budgets to slash funding for proven homeland security programs, veterans benefits, education and health care priorities, all the while cutting taxes for millionaires who need the break the least.

As real-life indicators of poor Federal spending choices, such as stagnant wages, soaring crime rates and rising health care premiums and drug prices begin to take their toll on Americans, it is our responsibility to react. Instead, inaction reigns under the direction of the current leadership.

In some cases, this inaction has yielded to half-hearted solutions, such as an energy bill that does more for oil and gas companies than lower gas prices, a Medicare bill that does more for drug companies and HMOs than make life-saving drugs affordable, a pension bill that takes it easy on corporate boards while ignoring the decline of traditional defined benefit plans.

Eleven days away from the start of the fiscal year, the record of this Republican Congress on the economy shows that we have not completed a budget or a single appropriations bill.

Fiscal irresponsibility has reached unprecedented new lows, depending on how you look at it. The debt limit has been raised for the fifth time in as many years to almost $10 trillion.

Perhaps we shouldn't be worried. After all, the President's budget director said last month that $200 billion annual deficits are sustainable indefinitely. Apparently normal budget rules don't apply to this administration.

But they do apply to a middle-class family of four living on Long Island whose monthly cost-of-living expenses, due mostly to rising gas prices and health care costs, are rapidly exceeding wage increases. Perhaps their creditors and collection agents will understand that outstanding debts owed by families sinking deeper into red ink are sustainable indefinitely.

We can fix this mess. We have the blueprint; a new direction for America. And we only need to look to past and proven methods, like the pay-as-you-go budget rules that were enforced in the previous administration and produced surpluses that helped us start buying down our national debt.

Indeed, we Democrats resolve to restore what should be the goals of our Federal budget, to reflect the priority of our Nation, to build a strong economy, and to set policies that reflect the values and priorities of the mainstream of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with all of my colleagues who recognize that it is long past time to reverse course on this economy and support a new direction for America.

□ 2045

BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to join my Democratic colleagues to call for a new direction in our Federal budget priorities. I want to thank my friend ARTUR DAVIS from the Budget Committee and the Democratic committee staff for arranging this series of speeches on this very important subject.

The Federal budget is much more than a boring government document or irrelevant policy paper. The Federal budget is our Nation's mission statement. The budget is our collective expression of our national priorities, and it reflects the values of our national leadership. Unfortunately, the values of the current national leadership, as reflected in the Federal budget, are a sorry state of affairs.

I am very proud that during my first term in this United States House, Congress and the President joined together to move toward balancing the Federal budget for the first time in decades. Democrats and Republicans reached across the partisan aisle and worked together to balance the books for the first time in over a generation.

The surpluses generated from the balanced budget were used to pay down the national debt, strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund and to make key investments in essential services like education and health. And we had enough left over to fund cutting-edge research and development that is the gateway to America's economic future and quality of life.

Unfortunately, all of that progress was reversed when the current administration took office. The current administration and the Republican Party bosses here in Congress have passed incredibly irresponsible budgets with disastrous results for our economy and for future generations. These record deficits and rising national debt present a crushing burden as our legacy and produce profound neglect of our basic infrastructure.

Just this morning, the Raleigh, North Carolina, News and Observer reported my State is running billions of dollars short in funding necessary to rejuvenate aging roads, schools and water systems. The 2006 North Carolina Infrastructure Report Card by the American Society of Engineers gave my State a C-minus grade on nine key categories of infrastructure readiness.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Federal Government needs to work in partnership with our States and local communities to meet the needs of our people.

I have worked for several years with my good friend Congressman CHARLIE RANGEL of the Ways and Means Committee to pass Federal legislation to leverage school bonds on the local level. This legislation will make a real difference throughout America to build new schools, relieve overcrowding, enhance safety and improve education for our children. Unfortunately, under the current Republican regime, we cannot even get a hearing on the Rangel-Etheridge bill.

But worse than not passing new bills, the Republican budget fails to pay for the laws they have put on the books. For example, the No Child Left Behind, which the President bragged about as

his signature legislation reform achievement, has never been fully funded. To date, Republicans in the White House and Congress have short-changed our schools roughly $50 billion that they promised under No Child Left Behind. Talk to any educator. They can tell you. Promises unmet are programs unfulfilled.

This disgraceful record is a direct result of those misguided budgets. I believe in my bones that public education is one of the best investments that we can make in building a bright future, but under the current Federal budget, the taxpayers will pay nearly three times as much to service the interest on the national debt as we will invest in education at the Federal level, and nearly 45 percent of that national debt is held by foreign investors like China, Japan, Europe and elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, America needs a new direction. The first place we can start is reversing the current budget priorities that we have that are out of touch with our American values.

I congratulate my colleagues for leading this series of speeches on this important issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCOTT of Virginia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KIND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COOPER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BAIRD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IMMINENT CRISIS IN DARFUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues in the House to act quickly on an issue where literally thousands of lives hang in the balance. I speak, of course, of the situation in Darfur, where the Sudanese Government is pursuing a policy of genocide.

This is different than your run-of-the-mill civil war. This is a case in which a government has pursued policies of widespread destruction, rape and murder in order to destroy entire tribes that it considers enemies.

The Sudanese Government and its allies consciously target civilians.

I do not care which term you prefer, a systematic violation of human rights, violations of international law, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide, the undisputable bottom line is that the Sudanese Government is carrying out and supporting acts so reprehensible and so horrible that no one with the ability to try to stop it can, in good conscience, fail to do so.

For the last 3 years, the Sudanese Government and its proxies, the Janjaweed militias, have been attacking villages in Darfur; destroying homes, crops and properties; and killing, raping and torturing innocent civilians in a concerted effort to destroy, or at least displace, the tribes most closely associated with the Darfur rebel groups. As a result of this violence and the resulting starvation, exposure and disease, 300,000 people have died, and 2 million more are refugees.

A cease-fire agreement was reached in 2004, and the Sudanese Government agreed to monitoring by an African Union force of 7,000 troops.

The deployment of this African mission in Sudan, inadequate though it was to oversee an area the size of Texas, forced the Sudanese Government and the Janjaweed militias to be a bit more surreptitious about their genocidal activities, which continued, but at a significantly slower pace.

The Sudanese Government and one rebel faction signed a peace agreement this past May. Nevertheless, the killing by government forces and the Janjaweed militias has continued. In fact, the Sudanese Government has launched a major military offensive to finish the job in Darfur before it is compelled by international pressure to allow the U.N. peacekeepers into the region. This is a major violation of the Darfur peace agreement.

The mandate of the African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur is set to expire at the end of September, just over a week from now. At that point there will be no military force protecting the people of Darfur from the central government and the Janjaweed militias, and no official observers to deter the Sudanese military and militias by bearing witness to their acts. The only constraint on the Sudanese Government's genocidal policies will be gone, and many of us are worried that what will follow will rival the level of death and destruction inflicted in Rwanda 12 years ago. Moreover, without the AU peacekeepers in place, humanitarian aid deliveries will grind to a halt, endangering the 3 million people who rely on that aid for survival.

Millions of lives are at stake, and the only practical solution at hand is an extension of the AMIS peacekeeping force's mandate. The AU Peace and Security Council is expected to approve the AMIS mandate tomorrow. We need to do our part as well.

Recently the other body adopted an amendment to the 2007 defense appropriations bill that would increase funding for the African Mission in Sudan by $20 million. The other body, to its great credit, recognized the fact that only the African Mission in Sudan can prevent the likely deaths of thousands of people.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to adopt this provision in the conference report, in this appropriations bill. We have no morally acceptable choice but to act and act quickly. Let us do our part to prevent more deaths in Darfur.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR AMBITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the President of Iran has just addressed the United Nations General Assembly. He well could have declared victory. Hezbollah, a creature of Iran, created and funded by Iran, attacked Israel. The resulting conflict diverted attention from Iran's nuclear program and bolstered Iran's position in the Middle East. Our invasion of Iraq has removed from the chess board what was once a bloody rival of Iran for power in its own region, and now Iraq saps America's strength.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad came to New York with a stamp of approval for his country's nuclear program from the 100-plus members of the nonaligned movement, where he led a festival of America-bashing.

Most importantly, Ahmadinejad has brazenly ignored the August 31 deadline from the United Nations Security Council to cease enrichment of nuclear fuel.

A nuclear Iran would be a catastrophe. That regime has already been listed as number one on the list of state sponsors of terrorism year after year by our own State Department.

With nuclear weapons, Iran could blatantly sponsor the most horrific terrorist events, feeling itself immune from retaliation.

The Iranian regime could terrify its Muslim neighbors and interrupt their oil exports. Conversely, it could inspire Middle East States to develop their own nuclear weapons. If the Tehran regime got just a little bit crazier than they are, it could smuggle a weapon into the United States and then threaten to explode it if we did not change our policies.

Finally, if that regime were about to be overthrown, and many of us look forward to that day, it could use its nuclear weapons against its own people, or it could use them against Israel as a final parting act.

Ahmadinejad declared in one of his recent famous diatribes that the United States should bow down and surrender.

Mr. Amadinijad, we already have. Our unilateral concessions began in 1999 when we opened our markets to Iranian exports, not oil which we could use, but only the stuff Iran cannot sell elsewhere like caviar.

Since then we have acquiesced in World Bank loans to the Iranian Government. We allow corporations to do business in Iran through their foreign subsidiaries. And last year we opened the door to Iran's membership in the WTO. For 6 years, the Bush administration has violated U.S. law by refusing to apply the Iran-Libya Sanctions Acts to billions of dollars of investments in the Iranian oil sector. All this while energy sanctions were effective in changing Libya's behavior.

Most recently, Condoleezza Rice and President Bush personally approved a visa for a five-city U.S. propaganda tour by Amadinijad's predecessor, former Iranian President Khatami. Amazingly, the U.S. taxpayer picked up part of the tab for Khatami's terrorism promotion tour. We paid for the security. As you remember, the last time there were American officials in Iran, there wasn't much security and they were taken hostage and held for 44 days.

There is a certain symmetry to all this, Mr. Speaker. According to the 9/11 Commission, during the administration of Khatami, Iran used its taxpayer dollars to provide safe harbor and protection to al Qaeda terrorists. Now U.S. tax dollars are used to provide safe harbor and protection for Khatami.

The failure of this administration to persuade the U.N. Security Council, particularly Russia and China, to impose sanctions on Iran for developing nuclear weapons is the greatest diplomatic failure of our time. Why have they failed? Because they refuse the concept of linkage. We seek Russia's help on Iran while refusing to make the slightest concession on issues Russia cares about like Moldavia, Chechnya, Obkazia, any reasonable U.S. policy which subordinates these issues that are minor to us to the goal of preventing a nuclear Iran.

Likewise, we refuse to link how China deals with Iran with how we deal with China on trade issues, such as how we choose to respond to their legally questionable currency manipulations.

Mr. Speaker, the options are clear. We can use all our economic and diplomatic power, including linkage, to stop Amadinijad's nuclear weapon program, or we can bow down and surrender.

Actually, the Bush administration has embraced a third option. Talk tough, avoid effective action, especially linkage, and take solace in the fact that the policy failure will not become manifest and Iran will not develop and test a nuclear weapon until after 2008. Bush refuses linkage. We are doomed to a nuclear Iran.

□ 2100

CONGRESSIONAL CONSTITUTION CAUCUS CONSTITUTION HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. SCHMIDT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we come to the floor tonight for our weekly Congressional Constitution Caucus Constitution Hour to honor the annual Constitution Day, September 17. September 17 marks the anniversary of the signing of our founding legal document, the U.S. Constitution.

On September 17, 1787, 39 revolutionary and visionary Founding Fathers changed the course of history and this country and the world, securing liberties and freedoms that centuries of civilization had only dreamed of before and that democracies around the world have tried to emulate ever since. I encourage all of my colleagues to use this occasion to remind us all and all Americans of the true intent of the U.S. Constitution and all the rights and the liberties that are guaranteed to them when our government was first formed. Today more than ever before these freedoms are too often encroached upon by every branch of government.

Unfortunately, for most Americans, the Constitution is nothing more than a historical document, really, too often cited, and cited inaccurately, and nearly always greatly misunderstood.

Still more unfortunate, this esteemed body and our Federal Government have lowered the standard of constitutional understanding and adherence, and so it is no wonder the general public has little interest or comprehension of the intent of our Nation's Founding Fathers. Just today, for example, if someone tuned in to see the discussion on C–SPAN of what was going on on the floor, the House was debating, as if, you might say, a school board was debating, for we were looking at legislation of how schools should be run with regard to their securities within their confines.

Thomas Jefferson was once asked the question, why is it that the Federal Government does not regulate and promote schools throughout the country? And he answered the question by saying: Madam, we shall do so when the Constitution is amended to say that we have the right and constitutional power to do so. But until that time, we shall not.

Here in the House floor today, unfortunately, we were doing just that, acting as if this was one large superschool board for the entire 50 States of this country.

But we were happy to come to the floor, along with my colleague from Utah, earlier this evening and other members of the caucus to help reorient the conversation to the original beliefs of our Founding Fathers and purposes of our founding documents. I think we have become a society that has begun to take for granted our systems of self-government and our liberties and freedoms. You know, gone are the days of the tyrannical rulers that inspired patriots to dump tea in the Boston Harbor or to compel Patrick Henry to cry out, ''Give me liberty or give me death,'' or motivated such important luminaries as General George Washington, who successfully led a patchwork of army of little resources and even less hope to take up arms against one of the mightiest armies in the world for their freedom.

As societies around the world are currently struggling to establish or maintain democracy as the true model of self-government, let us not forget the many rights that we possess and the single document that protects them.

So as we celebrate the anniversary of our signing of our Nation's most significant legal document, let us each and every one of us try to better familiarize ourselves with it. Highlighting and understanding what the Constitution actually says; what the intent of the authors actually was, and how it is now interpreted, stretched, or ignored will empower the public, like our forefathers once did, to stand up for their innate rights and to resist the growth of government at every level.

You see, Mr. Speaker, it is easy to let our rights slip away, but tremendously difficult to get them back ever again. The best weapons that we have against either of those things ever happening is to arm ourselves with the knowledge found in the United States Constitution.

And so I conclude as I had once before on this floor, to encourage this House to adopt legislation that is pending right now called the AMERICA Act, which is simply asking every Member of this body to on a yearly basis to simply read the Constitution, and their staffs as well. Let us start in this body to have an understanding of the Constitution and to share that belief with the American public as well.

SUDAN TEETERING ON THE EDGE OF DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. As the end of the session begins to revolve and move toward an end, you begin to hear a lot of discussions about the end of the session business or unfinished business. And I hope as we proceed toward the first conclusion of the 109th Congress, we will view the concept of unfinished business as not only domestic but international. I ask that this body and the administration, this Nation, not have on our clock another Rwanda.

I don't think our former President would mind when I make the remarks that one of the most difficult days and difficult times of that past administration was the failure to act expeditiously on Rwanda. And today we ask that Sudan not be another Rwanda, Sudan that is now teetering on the edge of disaster, human disaster, and the devastation of thousands upon hundreds of thousands of human beings. And what is the reason? The reason simply is one person, one man, one human being, one head of state, one president. The President of Sudan indicates that if the African Union peacekeepers were to set foot on the soil of Sudan, he would consider it an attack and therefore attack individuals dispatched by the world community.

Now, the question becomes, what is the response of this world community? Is it intimidation, to be intimidated? Is it false diplomacy, to sit back and allow this person to brutalize and to, if you will, reject the hand of friendship offered by the collective world community?

I ask that we not be intimidated and oppressed by the President of Sudan and that we demand that African Union peacekeepers who have been dispatched by the United Nations, the very body that has been sent to bring the world nations together to solve problems, do their job. And that requires sometimes enhanced diplomacy, not accepting diplomacy, and certainly a firm hand and firm attitude and firm action.

None of us are asking to provoke violence, but violence already exists in the Sudan. For those of us who have gone, some of us who went through Chad because the Sudanese Government refused to give a number of Members of Congress the diplomatic papers necessary, many just simply went. When I went to Chad and visited with the refugees there in the camps, Chad already as a neighboring country is overwhelmed and being, if you will, undermined by the hundreds of thousands of refugees and the lack of support and resources. I was glad to support an amendment to the foreign operations appropriations to ensure that some of those heavy burdens of Chad would be provided for.

But you have not and cannot understand the devastation of violence in Sudan if you have not sat down on the ground with the women in a circle as I have in those refugee camps listening to women who would not look at me face to face, who hid their eyes and their faces, who didn't want to talk about the massive rapes over and over again by those who would intimidate, rape, murder their men and them and their children. Women who had to go out to get the firewood because the man could not. The men obviously were not raped, they were brutalized and murdered, and so the women sacrificed their bodies by going out to be raped, because if the men went out they would be murdered. Is this not a call to action? Is this not a reason to tell the President of Sudan to stand down and step aside?

We have gone into conflict and we have had rousing and vigorous debates on lesser items than this. And so to the President who is now at the United Nations, it is time to turn these three days of the general assembly around issues of severity. There is life or death matters going on in Sudan. And might I just say this: just a few weeks ago, there was some sort of survey that categorized the Members of Congress and their response to these issues. Unfortunately, it was a skewed survey, because one of the amendments that it scored was an amendment that this Congress utilize to make a point by taking money away from Egypt. Obviously, that is not the right way to go when you talk about solving the problem of Sudan. The way to solve the problem for Sudan is to put an allotment of dollars that doesn't take away from anyone and enhances both the resources necessary for bringing those violent perpetrators out of there and away from those refugees, and as well supporting the African Union peacekeepers.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2463. An act to designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Reservation Area, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2864) ''An Act to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes,'' agrees to a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOND, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. CHAFEE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. VITTER, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CARPER, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

REAL SECURITY SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, 229 years ago today, American forces under the command of General Horatio Gates defeated the British at Saratoga, New York. This battle and the subsequent engagement at Saratoga several weeks later turned the tide of the American Revolution and were crucial in securing the survival of our fledgling Nation.

More than two centuries later, the United States is the most powerful Nation on Earth, but we face myriad challenges to our national security that our revolutionary forebearers could not have imagined.

Throughout much of our history, the security of our Nation was an issue that was above politics. America's leaders put aside their differences and, working together, ensured that our country remained strong and free. Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, that bipartisan tradition has been cast aside by our GOP colleagues who have sought for the last three decades to portray the Democratic Party as weak on defense or insufficiently concerned with defending the United States. Never mind that this wholly distorts the historical record of Democrats who have always, always answered the Nation's call to lead in the defense of our country. It was Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, who led America during the first World War and vowed to make the world safe for democracy.

□ 2115

It was Franklin Roosevelt, a Democrat, who guided this Nation and the entire free world through World War II.

It was Harry Truman, a Democrat, who made the tough decisions to use the atomic bomb against Japan to contain Soviet expansionism after the war and to confront the North Korean attack against South Korea in 1950.

It was John Kennedy, a Democrat, who went eyeball to eyeball with Nikita Khrushchev during the Cuban missile crisis.

These great leaders and their successors, including Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton, never shied away from the hard fights, and our friends on the other side of the aisle know it. Nevertheless, Republicans have continued to try to scare the American people into believing that only they can protect the country.

This shameful use of national security as a political wedge issue has reached new lows since the September 11 attacks. In 2002 and 2004 and again in this election season, Republicans from President Bush on down have used terrorism as a political issue. In so doing,

they have up-ended America's long tradition of optimism, self-confidence and bipartisanship on national security.

In 1933, President Roosevelt told a Nation shaken by 3 years of depression that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. President Bush has spent the last 5 years telling the American people the only thing we really have to fear is the loss of GOP rule.

My colleagues, including the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the other distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), and the gentleman from my home State of California (Mr. CARDOZA) will join tonight in a message to the American people that we must change course from the administration's policies which have endangered our country, and that Democrats will do a better job at protecting the American people.

Our plan, Real Security, was developed with the assistance of a broad range of experts, former military officers, retired diplomats, law enforcement personnel, homeland security experts and others who helped identify key areas where current policies have failed and where new ones are needed.

The Real Security Plan rests on five pillars. They involve the creation of a 21st century military, a smart strategy to win the war on terror, a plan to secure our homeland, a way forward in Iraq, and a proposal for achieving energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, a Democratic Congress will rebuild the state-of-the-art military by making needed investments in equipment and manpower so we can project to protect America wherever and whenever necessary.

We have all heard stories of parents throughout the country using their own money to purchase body armor for their children serving in Iraq. I have asked Secretary Rumsfeld about the shortage of body armor and the lack of properly armored vehicles, about hold-ups in the development of equipment to counter roadside bombs that have killed and maimed so many of our troops. Despite his assurances, the last few months have seen a spike in the number of IED attacks against American forces in Iraq, and they seem more lethal than ever.

Under Real Security, Democrats will guarantee all of our troops have the protective gear, the equipment, the training they need and are never sent to war without accurate intelligence and a strategy for success.

I have been to Iraq three times, Afghanistan twice. I visit our troops wounded here at home, there in Germany. I have spoken at the funerals of my constituents killed in Iraq. I have sat with their families as they have mourned. These experiences have reinforced my sense of commitment to ensuring the well-being of America's soldiers and their families and our veterans.

Democrats will enact a GI Bill of Rights for the 21st Century that guarantees our troops, Active, Reserve, retired, our veterans and their families, receive the pay, health care, mental health services and other benefits they have earned and deserve.

Our Active military are stretched to the breaking point, but our Guard and Reserves have also been ground down by multiple deployments, falling enlistment and reenlistment. This has, in turn, added to the stress.

I remember meeting one young marine from California when I was in Iraq who had been there for 9 months and was on his way home. His wife, also in the service of this country, was on her way to Iraq. These are the kinds of deployments that are so taxing on our military families.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats will strengthen our National Guard in partnership with our Nation's Governors to ensure it is fully manned, properly equipped and available to meet missions at home and abroad.

The next pillar of Real Security is a broad strategy to win the war on terror. Four-and-a-half years, five years after 9/11, Osama bin Laden is still at large. Al Qaeda has morphed into a worldwide amalgam of discrete cells that are more difficult to track down. When Democrats are in charge, we will make the elimination of Osama bin Laden our first priority. We will destroy al Qaeda and other terrorist networks and finish the job in Afghanistan, ending the threat posed by the Taliban. We propose to double the size of our Special Forces, increase our human intelligence capabilities, and ensure that our intelligence is free from political pressure.

Despite their vow to drain the swamp, the administration has done little to eliminate terrorist breeding grounds by combating the economic, social and political conditions that allow extremism to thrive. Democrats will fight terrorism with all the means at our disposal, using military force when necessary, but also leading international efforts to uphold and defend human rights and renew the long-standing alliances that have advanced our national security objectives.

Under Real Security, we will confront the specter of nuclear terrorism by greatly accelerating the pace at which we are securing nuclear material that can be used to make a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb. Our goal is to secure loose nukes by 2010. We will redouble our efforts to stop nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea. And while Democrats understand that no option can be taken off the table, we are committed to using a muscular diplomacy as the best option for curbing Pyongyang and Iran's nuclear ambitions.

The third pillar of Real Security is homeland security. In the wake of 9/11, there have been numerous commissions and investigations at the Federal, State and local levels, as well as a multitude of private studies. All of them have pointed to broad, systemic and other flaws in our homeland security program. Almost 2 years ago the bipartisan 9/11 Commission published its report, but most of its recommendations have not yet been implemented.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats will immediately implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, including securing national borders, ports, airports and mass transit systems. We will implement the screening of 100 percent of containers and cargo bound for the United States in ships or airplanes at their point of origin, and we will take steps to better safeguard America's nuclear and chemical plants and our food and water supplies.

Democrats will prevent the outsourcing of critical components of our national security infrastructure such as ports, airports and mass transit to foreign interests that could put America at risk.

Under Real Security, Democrats would provide firefighters, emergency medical workers, police officers, and other workers on the front lines with the training, the staffing, the equipment and the cutting-edge technology that they need.

While the immediate threats to our national security come from terrorists, we face other dangers as well. Democrats are committed to a security strategy that will protect America from biological terrorism and pandemics, including the avian flu, by investing in the public health infrastructure and training public health workers.

The fourth pillar, and the one that will have the most immediate effect on our security and the longest-term effect on our security, is to chart a new course in Iraq that will ensure that in the coming months we see a significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with the Iraqis assuming primary responsibility for securing and governing their country with a responsible redeployment of U.S. forces.

Democrats will insist that Iraqis make the political compromises that are necessary to unite their country, defeat the insurgency, and we will promote regional diplomacy and strongly encourage our allies in other nations to play a constructive role. Those nations now are largely on the sidelines.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats intend to hold this administration accountable for its manipulated prewar intelligence, its poor planning, contracting abuses that have placed our troops at greater risk and have wasted billions of taxpayer dollars.

Our security will remain threatened as long as we remain dependent on Middle East oil. The fifth pillar, and one with far-reaching ramifications for our country and for the world, is to achieve energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, Democrats will increase the production of alternate fuels from America's heartland: biofuels, geothermal, clean coal, fuel

cells, solar and wind. We will promote hybrid and flex-fuel technology in manufacturing, enhance energy efficiency and conservation measures. All of this we will do, and more, to meet the real national security needs of our country.

We are joined tonight by the minority whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), who has been a great leader on national security issues. I would invite the minority whip to address us this evening, along with our colleague from Maryland and our colleague from Georgia.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding the time, and I am pleased to join him and certainly adopt his remarks, which I think are fundamental to this debate that will be going on for the next 6 weeks in our country about how we effect Real Security. That is our objective. That is our commitment as Democrats.

We believe that terrorism is a real threat. We believe that we have a responsibility to confront and defeat that threat. That is our responsibility as citizens, and that is our responsibility as elected representatives.

I am pleased to join Mr. SCHIFF, who has been such a leader on national security issues in the Congress; my dear friend from Maryland and colleague Mr. VAN HOLLEN, who has a depth of knowledge and experience in foreign policy issues and national security issues; and my good friend from the State of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT. The State of Georgia has historically had leaders in national defense. On our side of the aisle, most recently was Sam Nunn, one of the most extraordinarily able and thoughtful spokespersons for national security.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for taking this time. Our highest duty as Members of this Congress is to protect the American people, to protect our homeland and to strengthen our national security. We Democrats are proud of our party's strong tradition of leadership in world affairs from Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman and John Kennedy, indeed to Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton, it will be recalled, most recently marshaled the NATO Alliance, received the imprimatur of the United Nations, confronted the genocide being led by Slobodan Milosevic, defeated and stopped the genocide, stopped the ethnic cleansing, and put Slobodan Milosevic in the dock in trial at the Hague, all without losing a single American life in combat.

These leaders demonstrated that defending America requires our Nation to marshal the full range of its powers, economic and moral, diplomatic and military, to fight for freedom, to foster democracy, and to defeat tyranny and terrorism.

I believe that Members on both sides of the aisle are committed to this Nation's security. Any suggestion to the contrary, in my opinion, is either mistaken or quite possibly malicious partisanship. Furthermore, I believe that members of the loyal opposition, in this case us congressional Democrats, have the responsibility to critique the wisdom and effectiveness of the policies pursued by the majority party. That is what our Founding Fathers conceived. That is what our Founding Fathers believed was absolutely essential for the success of our democracy: A Congress and an executive and indeed a judiciary that provided checks and balances, provided thoughtful alternatives to policies being pursued, and provided constructive criticism. The fact is our Nation and our people are not as safe today as they could and should be.

□ 2130

I accept the fact that we are safer, but I repeat, that we are not as safe as we could or should be. Osama bin Laden, the architect of the worst terrorist attack on America in our history, remains at large. We still have not fully implemented the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, for which the commission itself has criticized us sharply. In fact, Tom Kean, the co-chair, the former Republican Governor of the State of New Jersey, the co-chair of the 9/11 Commission and the former Republican Governor, as I said, of New Jersey, recently stated: ''We are not protecting our own people in this country. The government is not doing its job.'' What powerful words and what a call to attention are Governor Kean's words.

Meanwhile, the nuclear threats from North Korea and Iran have increased dramatically in the last 6 years. The Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan, where roadside bombs have increased 30 percent and suicide bombings have doubled. And anti-Americanism has unfortunately and dangerously risen by substantial proportions. Even former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, who has served this country so honorably in uniform and as a diplomat, remarked last week: ''The world is beginning to doubt the moral basis of our fight against terrorism.''

That is an extraordinary dangerous condition. We cannot nor should we fight this war against terrorists alone. We must have allies. We must have allies who respect us, who believe that our word is credible, and believe that our leadership is based upon values, insight, good intelligence, and conviction. Without question, Madam Speaker, our continuing military action in Iraq has fomented much of this anti-American sentiment.

Let me add that I supported the effort to remove Saddam Hussein as the dictator in Iraq. Democrats, however, as the loyal opposition, believe that we have a duty to honestly appraise the gross miscalculations and, I suggest, even incompetence that have plagued Operation Iraqi Freedom from its very start and to offer alternatives.

The administration ignored the advice of top military commanders and sent far too few troops to accomplish the task at hand. Recall, if you will, that we sent over a half million troops in the fall of 1990 to confront Saddam Hussein and his army in the late winter of 1991. We sent those troops to eject Hussein from Kuwait. We sent a force one-third, however, the size in 2003 not only to confront Saddam Hussein's army but to take control and stabilize an entire nation of 22 million-plus people and to ensure its stability.

As Tom Friedman of the New York Times has stated: ''If we're in such a titanic struggle with radical Islam and if getting Iraq right is at the center of that struggle, why did the Bush administration fight the Iraq war with the Rumsfeld doctrine, just enough troops to lose, and not the Powell doctrine of overwhelming force to create the necessary foundation of any democracy-building project, which is,'' of course, ''security?''

The administration, with Mr. Bremer as its viceroy in Iraq, fired police and security forces and oil workers, which increased, not decreased, instability. It initiated the war before making alternative plans when the Turks told us that we could not come in through the north so we could shut the back door to Baghdad. And as a result, many of those in the Saddam Hussein armed forces escaped and were a basis for an insurgency.

In fact, just this month Brigadier General Mark Scheid revealed that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld said he would ''fire the next person'' who talked about the need for a post-war plan. There was no effective plan for post-Saddam Hussein regime nation-building. As a result, chaos occurred.

The administration failed to properly equip our own troops, Mr. SCHIFF has pointed that out, nearly 2,700 of whom have given the ultimate measure of sacrifice in this war. All of us in our districts have lost people in this war.

The administration grossly underestimated the cost of the war at about $60 billion. Today, the war costs stand at five times that amount, in excess of $300 billion. All of that has happened, I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, without significant oversight and appropriate hearings being conducted by this Congress, which is our responsibility to our constituents and to our country.

The administration hired inexperienced and unqualified political appointees for the Coalition Provisional Authority, as The Washington Post reported on Sunday. And when confronted with concrete evidence of widespread mistreatment of detainees in American custody, the President failed to hold anyone in his administration accountable.

All of this, Madam Speaker, has undermined the effectiveness of an effort that I supported. Some did not. But whether you supported it or you did not, you must lament the fact that the execution of the policy has been so unsuccessful.

Madam Speaker, as Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold, the former commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, has stated: ''What we are living with now is the consequence of successive policy failures.'' That is not a Democrat or a Republican but a three-star general concerned about his troops, concerned about our country, concerned about the success of an effort given to our Armed Forces.

The current strategy for our military, our security, and the Iraqi people is neither working nor making us more secure. Our colleague Congressman SKELTON of Missouri has pointed out that there is not a single Army non-deployed combat brigade currently prepared to meet its wartime mission. That, Madam Speaker, is an extraordinary assertion and I suggest an accurate one as well.

Meanwhile, the news in Iraq is equally dire. The chief of intelligence for the Marine Corps in Iraq has concluded that prospects for securing that country's Anbar Province are dim and there is almost nothing the U.S. military can do to improve the political and social situation there. Thirty-four people were killed in suicide attacks on Monday in Tal Afar and Ramadi. Fifty-two bound and tortured corpses were found across Baghdad on Friday. And just today General John Abizaid, the commander of the U.S. Central Command, said that the U.S. military will likely maintain or possibly increase current force levels through next spring due to rising sectarian violence and the slow progress of the Iraqi Government.

Madam Speaker, I want the Iraqi Government to succeed. I want democracy to flourish. I want a robust economy creating jobs and hope for its people to be in place. However, Madam Speaker, the policies that we have pursued have not accomplished that objective.

Clearly, Madam Speaker, we need a new direction. I believe, as former National Security Adviser Brzezinski has said, that American and Iraqi leaders should jointly consult on a plan to transition from active American leadership and policing and securing Iraq to increasing Iraqi responsibility.

I do not believe that we should announce an arbitrary timeline, but I do believe that discussions on this transition should be agreed upon and jointly announced.

In addition, the Iraqi Government, not the United States, should then call for a regional conference of Muslim states to ask them to help the new government establish and consolidate internal stability. I suggest, Madam Speaker, that is in the interest of every regional state in the Middle East.

Additionally, the United States should convene a donors' conference of European states, Japan, China, and others to become more directly involved in financing the restoration of the Iraqi economy. A stable, secure, and free Iraq is in the best interest of the entire international community; and because it is in their interest, they bear a joint responsibility to effect that end.

Madam Speaker, this is our last best chance, in my opinion, to salvage success in Iraq. Our commitment there has been unwavering, but it must not be unending. Our strategy, hampered by gross miscalculations by our civilian leadership, is not working; and we believe that we have a duty to advocate for policy changes that will better serve our security interest and this great Nation we love.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I reiterate, Democrats are committed to defending America, making safe Americans, and defeating terrorists who would harm our Nation and undermine our values. Our policies that we are pursuing have not worked. They need to be changed.

Again, I thank Mr. SCHIFF for his leadership on this hour.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his leadership.

And I particularly appreciate your comments about the proposal that Zbigniew Brzezinski has put forward. It is, I think, exemplary of the new direction in Iraq that Democrats have been advocating.

The administration's policy of stay the course, the sum and substance of it, is more of the same. Indeed, in a nonclassified briefing when I asked Secretaries Rumsfeld and Rice, Director Negroponte and General Pace how are we adapting our strategy given that the sectarian violence is now more prominent than the insurgent violence, how are we changing from a counterinsurgency strategy to one that attempts to stop the civil war, the long and short of it is we weren't. We are simply doing the same thing we have done all along. The same thing that has led us to a place, as you pointed out, where Marine intelligence is saying we lost Anbar Province probably for good. If you keep doing the same thing and you expect the result to be different, you are going to be bitterly disappointed.

And I thank the gentleman for his comments and his leadership on this.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHIFF. For a small State, I have to say Maryland produces more than its share of great leaders, particularly on the issue of national security.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHIFF. Yes.

Mr. HOYER. Of course our small State has given your large State our leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. That is true.

I now yield to my friend and colleague from Maryland, Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend and colleague Mr. SCHIFF from California, thank him for organizing these very important national security discussions here on the floor in the House. I also want to thank my colleague from Maryland STENY HOYER for his terrific leadership on national security and a whole range of issues, and it is great to be here again with DAVID SCOTT, my colleague, from Georgia, who has also been a leader and a very important voice on these important issues to our country.

Mr. HOYER mentioned that we had the important passing about 8 days ago of the solemn occasion of 9/11. It was the 5th-year anniversary of 9/11 and the terrible attacks that took place upon our country. And I do think it is important to go back to that time and remember where those attacks came from because they were launched from Afghanistan. You had a failed state in Afghanistan run by the Taliban; and in that failed state, al Qaeda was able to take hold and find a home, and Osama bin Laden was able to prosper and plot his attacks against the United States.

And after the attacks took place on September 11, 2001, this Congress, this country, and the international community were united in pledging that we would work together to defeat terrorism, to defeat al Qaeda and bring them to justice. And despite that unity, we have not achieved the result. In fact, if you look upon the situation today, there is great division in the world and we have failed to capitalize on that unity to finish the job in Afghanistan and against al Qaeda.

The President declared way back in 2003, May 2003, aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Lincoln*, he had a big banner behind him that said ''Mission Accomplished.'' Well, we haven't come close to accomplishing that mission because as we gather here on the floor today, Osama bin Laden is alive and well somewhere along the Afghan/Pakistan border, al Qaeda continues to plot attacks against the United States. They have become a franchiser. You know how al Qaeda franchises around the world.

□ 2145

We have not made progress at totally dismantling that organization. In fact, what we are seeing in southern Afghanistan is a resurgence of the Taliban as reported by the NATO Commander there, and our own commanders on the ground.

What have we done? We have actually reduced the number of U.S. forces in southern Afghanistan. We disbanded the one unit at the CIA that had the specific mission of going after al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

You open the newspaper today and see that the opium crop in Afghanistan is at an all-time high, historic high. And we also know that the Pakistan Government that we had been really relying on to keep the Taliban and al Qaeda on the run in the northwest frontier part of Pakistan, that, in fact, they have now, the Pakistani Government has entered into a nonaggression pact essentially with the Taliban leaders and the leaders in the Waziristan area.

So here we are more than 5 years after those terrible attacks, and we have not completed the job. We have not finished the mission against al Qaeda. And instead, in my view, we have actually reduced our commitment to doing that. And we must make sure that as Americans we are again united today, making sure we finish the mission in Afghanistan and bringing to justice and defeating the organization that, after all, was the organization and the leadership responsible for those attacks of September 11.

Instead, we did take our eye off the ball. We decided, instead of finishing the job in Afghanistan, to go into Iraq. And today, unfortunately, if you look at the situation on the ground, it is a mess.

You know, the Vice President, it was a little more a year ago, he went on national television and said, and I quote, that ''the insurgency in Iraq was in its last throes.''

Well, just a few weeks ago we had a Pentagon report required by Congress that said that the insurgency, and I quote, ''remains potent and viable.'' And, in fact, the insurgency no longer is our number one problem in Iraq. The real problem is the cycling civil war, whether it is called a civil war, an incipient civil war, incipient of people are being killed in sectarian violence.

So you have a situation where the administration was wrong on so many counts. They were wrong on weapons of mass destruction, they were wrong on the claim that there was a connection between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. In fact, we now have a bipartisan report out of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that said definitively there was never any relationship between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. In fact, they were adversaries, they were ideological opposites. They were wrong on that.

They were wrong on the cost of the war. They totally underestimated the cost of the war. They gave the American people one number that was lowballed. In turn it was a much bigger number.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. VAN HOLLEN, notwithstanding all of those mistakes in judgment and execution of the war, I am sure it gave you great confidence to hear from the Vice President on Meet the Press that if he had to do it all over again, he would do exactly the same thing. That must have encouraged you.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. It was stunning actually, because what you would hope for from our national leaders is some reflection, some understanding that the situation that we encountered in Iraq was not what we expected, that it was not what he said it would be. And, in fact, unfortunately this administration has never come to grips with the huge gap between what they said would happen in Iraq and with what is happening on the ground. That has exposed, I believe, a great credibility gap.

So when the administration says, trust us, we know what we are doing in Iraq; all you people who raise questions, don't you worry about it, I have to say, that is what they told us many, many years ago. That is what Vice President CHENEY said more than a year ago when he said the insurgency was in its last throes. So asking questions and trying to figure out a better way is, in fact, the patriotic thing to do.

But I think one of the things that is most surprising is the fact that the administration did not really have a postwar plan. They thought things were going to just go so swimmingly in Iraq, that you did not have to plan for really the postinvasion period.

In fact, just about a week ago, there was a general from the Defense Department who not only said that they did not have a postwar plan, but said specifically that Secretary Rumsfeld would punish anybody who came up with a plan, because it would send a signal to the outside world that this would not be as quick and easy as the Secretary of Defense wanted people to think it was.

And let me just, I think it is important to read this excerpt: ''Rumsfeld Forbade Planning for Postwar Iraq, General Says.'' This is out of the Saturday, September 9, Washington Post. ''Long before the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld forbade military strategists to develop plans for securing a postwar Iraq, the retiring Commander of the Army Transportation Corps said.''

Brigadier General Mark Scheid said in an interview, that Rumsfeld said ''he would fire the next person'' who talked about the need for a postwar plan. And we wonder why we are in trouble today in Iraq. We wonder when we open our newspapers or look at television sets why we see such a mess.

You know, the terrible thing is that there were people in the administration who had worked on a postwar plan. Many people at the State Department had developed different scenarios for what would happen and how to respond. But instead of following that plan, the Defense Department essentially junked it, and Secretary Rumsfeld not only did not come up with a plan, but now we have a brigadier general who said that he threatened to fire people who came up with a plan.

We need to do some more firing. We need to hold people accountable. We need to hold people accountable who made these big, big mistakes.

Now, one of the other things that we have learned recently, and this may be partly due to the fact that they did not have a postwar plan, was the incompetence of many of the civilians that they sent in there to work on the reconstruction phase in Iraq. You know, we recently passed the 1-year anniversary of the terrible Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that struck our States in the Southern United States, struck New Orleans, struck Louisiana, struck Mississippi.

And we know all too well that the people in those regions were hit twice really. First they were hit by a terrible hurricane, and then they were hit by the incompetence of a FEMA that was headed up by people who were not experts in emergency response, but happened to be political favorites in the administration. Michael Brown, we know that his primary credential was he had been the President of the Horse Breeders Association.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. VAN HOLLEN, I am sure if there had been an emergency of a national character involving thoroughbred horses, we would have been prepared.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, the FEMA job, as we know, is one that we have to be prepared for all sorts of things, but you are absolutely right, my colleague. It goes to show, in my view, the kind of disdain that the administration has with respect to what kind of qualifications are required for people who are vested with such important national responsibilities.

And we remember when the President said, ''Heck of a job, Brownie,'' in the midst of the real disaster not just from the hurricane, but in the response.

But what I think we are learning now, unfortunately, is that same kind of cronyism, that same kind of cronyism infected many of the decisions with respect to who we sent to Iraq for that postwar period and reconstruction period.

You would think that in deciding who we should send to Iraq, we would send the people who are highly qualified at reconstruction, people who knew something about Iraq, maybe people who spoke Arabic and the native language if we had them available. But if you look at a very recent article from the Washington Post, we learned that it was not those kind of expert qualifications that made the decision. It had to do with whether or not you were a big political supporter of the Bush administration.

And I think this kind of political cronyism, when it comes to the biggest national security issues we have got, shows an incredible contempt for the American people and their security.

I just think it is very important to read a little passage from this article from the Washington Post. This is an article, September, this past Sunday, September 17. Headline: Ties to GOP Trumped Know-How Among Staff Sent to Rebuild Iraq. After the fall of Saddam Hussein's government in April 2007, the opportunity to participate in the U.S.-led effort to reconstruct Iraq attracted all manner of Americans, restless professionals, Arabic-speaking academics, development specialists, and war-zone adventurers. But before they could go to Baghdad, they had to just get past Jim O'Beirne's office in the Pentagon.

To pass muster with O'Beirne, who is a political appointee who screens prospective political appointees for Defense Department posts, applicants did

not need to be experts in the Middle East or in postconflict reconstruction. What seemed most important was loyalty to the Bush administration.

Jumping down a bit: The decision to send the loyal and willing instead of the best and the brightest is now regarded by many people involved in the 3½-year effort to stabilize and rebuild Iraq as one of the Bush administration's gravest errors.

And one of the people who was set up to be, he was the CPA person over there, said: We did not tap, and it should have started from the White House on down, we just did not tap the right people to do this job, said Frederick Smith, who served as the Deputy Director of the CPA, that is the Coalition Provisional Authority's Washington office. It was a tough, tough job. Instead, we got people who went out there because of their political leanings.

He goes on to give a couple of examples of how people with absolutely no experience in contracts were given responsibilities for a $18 billion construction budget.

He goes on to talk about, you know, 24-year-old political appointees whose only qualifications were they had been part of the Bush campaign machine. Those are the people that were sent to Iraq to do a very important mission for the American people.

And it is extremely disturbing to discover that the qualifications for those people had nothing to do with their ability to do the job, their expertise to do the job, their past background to do the job; that what it had to do with was whether they were a big political booster of the Bush administration. It points out that many of them were big political contributors to the Bush administration.

Taking that kind of license with our national security, I think, is scandalous. It is important that we begin to hold people to account. Let's begin to have a real national conversation, not just a one-way discussion that the President wants to have.

Let's have some real hearings on Capitol Hill. Let's begin to have some accountability, because we all know that when you have a system that rewards people who fail, that gives a pat on the back to the people who constantly got it wrong, and yet at the same time penalizes the people who got it right in this administration, the people who said we needed more troops on the ground, the people who questioned some of the decisions, it turns out that people who questioned the decisions were ignored or penalized. People like this general who wanted to do some postwar planning was ignored. In fact, they threatened to fire people who did that kind of thing.

□ 2200

If you reward failure, you are going to get more failure. What we are asking I think tonight and on other nights is that we just begin to hold people accountable and that this House of Representatives begin to do its job, and not be a rubber stamp, not just say yes, Mr. President, you know it all, when in fact we know from what is going on in Iraq that they have gotten so much wrong. Let's begin to get it right, and let's begin to ask the hard questions. I thank my colleague.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank my colleague for his statement tonight and all your tremendous leadership on this. I am confident with Democrats we will not only have a new direction, but we will have a functioning government of checks and balances where there is actual oversight by the Congress of the administration, which every administration needs, no matter how good, but particularly when the administration has made such serious mistakes that have placed this Nation so much in jeopardy. We need oversight.

I would add only one thing, and this you may have watched, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the interview with the President from New Orleans when he went down for the Katrina anniversary, and Brian Williams asked him, ''Mr. President, some people have criticized that you have never really asked for a sacrifice of the American people in the war on terror. Is that a fair criticism?''

His answer really struck me, because we have been talking about the American people being brought in and given a chance to contribute to our security and our success with an Apollo-like project for energy independence.

Well, the President's idea of sacrifice, he said, ''Brian, that is not true. The American people have sacrificed. After 9/11, our economy was hurt, so American people sacrificed. And they pay taxes. They pay a lot of taxes, Brian.''

That was it. That was the sacrifice he was asking. Now, if he had been a little more forthcoming, he might have said, ''Now, Brian, they pay taxes. They pay a lot of taxes, although actually they pay less taxes since 9/11, thanks to me, so the sacrifice really is they pay less taxes. That is their contribution.''

And you have to ask, where are the Rosie the Riveters? Who is being called upon? These troops of ours that are doing these multiple rotations, they are sacrificing and their families are sacrificing. But what have the rest of us been asked to do? And in this body, I would think at a minimum we could move forward with far-reaching legislation to wean ourselves from reliance on fossil fuels. We could initiate real oversight with vigor. These are the kind of new directions we need to take this country in.

I yield now to my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, DAVID SCOTT, a fellow Blue Dog member, who has been such a superb voice on these issues.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much, Mr. SCHIFF. Of course, it is great to be here with you again, and my good friend CHRIS VAN HOLLEN from Maryland. He is a tremendous advocate for national security. I have enjoyed his opening remarks and very thought-provoking remarks. And certainly it is always good to be on the floor with our leader, STENY HOYER, who has long been a champion of national security. That is certainly the issue today.

This is the issue that is on the minds of the American people. This is prime time, national security. We have got to make sure the American people not only feel safe, but we guarantee that they are safe. We have the capacity to do that.

As I stand here, I was observing the remarks earlier about the contributions that the great State of Maryland and all of our great States have made to our strong defense and national security, and certainly I am proud to say that Georgia, my State, is certainly at the head of the list on that as well.

I stand here on the shoulders of some great folks who have been strong on national security and helped to secure this country and make us the superior military power that we are, men like Senator Sam Nunn and Senator Richard Russell from my fine State of Georgia. I stand here on the shoulders of those great Democratic leaders who have led the way.

Mr. SCHIFF. If I can interject, Mr. SCOTT, because I don't want to do any disservice to the great State of Georgia, a couple other superb Members who are contemporaries of ours, JIM MARSHALL and JOHN BARROW, great, great advocates and leaders on national security. JIM MARSHALL is a decorated war veteran. So Georgia has got more than its share.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Absolutely. JIM and I have traveled overseas together. He was a decorated war veteran from Vietnam. So we stand tall as Democrats when it comes to national security, without any question.

I want to start my remarks off, because I think today will go down in history as a very profound day, starting with the United Nations. Today presented some very interesting pictures as we watched television. Two speeches, of course, stand out on this day.

I don't think I can remember in history when the President of the United States addressed the United Nations, but yet one of our chief adversaries, one of which he labeled one of the ''axis of evil,'' the President of Iran, Ahmadinejad, came in prime time, while the President spoke earlier, not in prime time.

I am wondering how we got to this point? Where did this president of Iran come from? Five years ago we had never heard of him. Certainly I hadn't. But here he is at the United Nations, in fact upstaging our President. If I were working at the White House, I certainly would not have allowed the President of the United States to be over there on the same day. I felt that was very, very interesting.

It might do us a little good to understand how we got to this point, and the

way we do that, I think, is to start off this discussion by clearly pointing out to the American people something that they are gradually beginning to see, and that is this, that we are fighting two distinct wars; one war is on terror, the other war is in Iraq.

One war is of necessity. It was necessary. That is the war on terror, which is where we went into Afghanistan to go after the terrorist organization that attacked us on 9/11. That was a war of necessity, and we went there because that is where the enemy was that attacked us. That is where al Qaeda was. That is where bin Laden was, on that border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. We got the support of NATO and we got the support of the government of Afghanistan, with their help, and we went in there.

But then we went into Iraq, and we went into Iraq on a lot of manufactured, now we know the truth, incomplete information, maybe false information, perhaps even manipulated information. Those are the facts. That is what is out there. But, nonetheless, we went into Iraq in a war of choice.

Now we need to do a cost-benefit analysis, which brings me to the point I wanted to get to earlier, to segue back in, to show these two connecting points of what happened today, where the President of the United States is upstaged by the President of Iran, a president we did not even know about 5 years ago.

But when you do the cost-benefit analysis on the war of choice, which is the war in Iraq, not the war on terror, which is the war of necessity in Afghanistan, and do a cost-benefit analysis, in other words, look at our cost: 2,600 soldiers, men and women who gave their lives, who were killed; nearly 20,000 wounded; over $600 billion expended at a rate of $3 billion every week. That is the cost.

Who benefited? Who benefited? Who benefited? Iraq. When we went into Afghanistan, although we went in on the war on terror, we went after the Taliban, doing, again, Iraq's bidding. That was their enemy.

When we went into Iraq, without question the chief beneficiary of that was Iran. They were the beneficiaries, because Saddam Hussein was their worst blood enemy. We did the dirty work for Iran. On the other account, we established a Shia regime there, a Shia government in Iraq. That, again, was a benefit to Iran.

□ 2210

They were able to control that.

The other thing, all the while we are doing this, they are busy developing their nuclear capacity so that now that they have the nuclear capacity, again, a checkmate and a benefit for Iraq.

So that now my point is simply that because of some of our policies, most definitely going into Iraq, the major beneficiary of our going into Iraq is Iran, which now is boosted on the stage and is here this day, in this country, at the United Nations, giving a speech. And here is a man who is the sponsor of the very terrorist organization that controlled the Lebanon situation, as well as the Hamas, which controls the Palestinian.

All I am simply saying is our national security policies, our foreign policies have had a devastating impact, and that when we do the cost/benefit analysis, it certainly benefits Iraq. It has taken us away from pursuing the goal of finding and decapitating the head of the mastermind of the terrorist organization that came to destroy us.

That is why the American people are beginning to see this differentiation, and we are not going to be able to find our way out of this unless we finally do so we can understand exactly what this situation in Iraq is doing, and like you, we are not standing here just talking. We are standing here explaining how we earnestly feel as Americans, strong, patriotic Americans, who care about this country, and who resent the President of the United States saying that anytime we question that, we are not patriotic. We are doing our duty that the American people sent us up here to do to raise these important issues.

We cannot stay the course, not this course. Sixty-three percent of the American people say they want a new direction. It is up to Democrats to provide that direction.

The other issue which concerns me is the state of our military. Not only must we explain to the American people and help to dramatize and explain clearly and show how we are dealing with two distinct wars, one of necessity, one of choice, but the drain on the military, we have got to correct that. Our military is in a draining state. We are not meeting our recruiting goals. We are on two and three tours of duty there.

We are in a terrible hole in Iraq, and we have got to extricate ourselves out of it. The challenge is to do so with yet the dignity and the respect that we must do so to honor the sacrifice of our men and women who have given their lives there, while at the same time putting the responsibility on the Iraqis themselves to manifest their destiny. They want democracy. We cannot shove it at them with a gun. They have to feel it in their soul. They have to go forward and grab it. That is not happening, and that is what we have to do to get this moving forward in a way that gives the respect to our military who have given their lives there.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman very much for your comments, for your leadership on this issue. It has been a great pleasure and honor to share a few thoughts with you and our colleague Mr. VAN HOLLEN and our whip Mr. HOYER. Once again, I want to thank the great State of Georgia for sending you to Congress.

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. SCHMIDT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to come back before the House as representative of the majority party. And as I was sitting and listening to the tail end of my good friends on the other side of the aisle with their recitation of doom and gloom, Madam Speaker, I was reminded of a radio personality who has a wonderful program on daily. He comes on and he introduces his program by saying, ''And now for the rest of the story.''

So, Madam Speaker, I come before you tonight and before the House with another version of the Official Truth Squad. The Official Truth Squad began a little over a year ago with a group of freshmen Republicans in the United States House of Representatives who had, frankly, grown tired of the lack of response to the disinformation and the misinformation and the distortion and the demagoguery and the hyperbole that we hear over and over and over on the House floor. And, Madam Speaker, you have been treated to a particularly virulent form of that kind of disinformation and misinformation in the past hour.

Before I get into the comments that I had prepared for this evening to talk a little bit about national security and talk about our economy, I do want to point out a couple of items for those folks in the House who are listening and have just heard the comments on the floor.

I think it is important to make certain that we talk about the truth, and when we talk about the truth, I am reminded of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's famous quote. It is one of my favorites. Senator Moynihan was a Democratic Senator from the State of New York, and he said that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. Is that not true, Madam Speaker? Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts.

So I am here to point out just a few of the opinions that we have heard this evening that, in fact, bear no resemblance to the truth and bear no resemblance to fact, but that are so divisive to us as a Nation. That is what concerns me, Madam Speaker.

My background is as a physician. I came to Congress after over 20 years practicing medicine, and I knew that when I dealt with my patients and when I dealt with my colleagues, that we had to talk about the truth. We had to talk about real things. We had to talk about facts, because when you did not talk about facts, then you made the wrong diagnosis, and when you make the wrong diagnosis, somebody gets hurt. Somebody gets hurt.

So, Madam Speaker, when my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not want to talk about the facts, and they do not want to talk about the

truth, then somebody gets hurt, and in this instance it is the American people. It may even be the American fiber and the American spirit, the unity of America.

What we just heard is a remarkable demonstration of disunity, of division, of folks who, I do not know how long people have been listening, but I did not hear a single solution, not one solution offered.

Churchill said that criticism is easy; it is achievement that is difficult. Another one of my favorite quotes. Criticism is easy, but achievement is difficult.

You just heard a remarkable statement, and we have had a remarkable day with our President going to the United Nations and addressing the United Nations in his annual address. Because we are the host Nation, there is a defined time for that annual address, and it occurs in second speaking order. So it happened to occur during the middle of the day today. My friends on the other side of the aisle want to attribute the fact that the President was not on prime-time television tonight to some remarkable foible of this administration. Madam Speaker, what kind of nonsense is that? What kind of distortion of the truth is that?

So when we hear these kinds of things, it really disturbs me, it saddens me, because it cheapens the debate that we have here when you have that kind of distortion.

The question was asked, how did the President of Iran get to be so strong? But one of the reasons he is so strong is because our friends on the other side of the aisle have not participated in assisting us on an energy agenda that will make it so we have American energy for Americans. There is some truth for you. The folks who continue to throw stones on the other side of the aisle constantly, and we will talk about this this evening, make it so that they put roadblocks in the way of trying to increase American independence in the area of energy.

So, Madam Speaker, in fact, I would appreciate some help from the other side of the aisle for some United Nations reform. We have had a bill on the floor of the House here to reform the United Nations, to reform the United States' participation in the United Nations.

□ 2220

And goodness knows we can't get any support from our good friends on the other side of the aisle, but they are ready, willing, and able to come down to the House floor and criticize the United States for their participation in the United Nations. Are they willing to help us solve the problem? Madam Speaker, I haven't seen that.

I also heard my friend from Maryland this evening talk about the contractors in Iraq. And he used as the font of all wisdom and knowledge about the contractors in Iraq who were hired. Madam Speaker, did you hear who he used as the resource for all of that? You know, when we were growing up we would have to cite our resources in our papers for school and for university, and it had to be something reliable. Did you hear who we used, Madam Speaker? The Washington Post. Now there is a reliable source for you.

But when he brought that information, he didn't bring it by way of enlightenment; he brought it by way of criticism, by way of division, by way of tearing down those individuals who are working just as hard as they can to make certain that Iraq is restored and has an opportunity to become a democratic and sovereign nation on its own. Division, division, distortion, demagoguery, misinformation, disinformation. Madam Speaker, I would ask the gentleman from Maryland to apologize to the Members, to the United States citizens who are working as hard as they can in Iraq as independent contractors, risking their lives just like the military. Some of them have actually been murdered by our enemies in Iraq. So I would hope that the gentleman would reconsider what he said.

Don't you get tired of it, Madam Speaker, that kind of distortion of the fact, that kind of division? I certainly do, and I know my constituents do at home. They get tired of the fighting, of the backbiting. They get tired of three or four individuals who can stand up here for an hour on the floor of the House and not offer one single, one single positive solution to the challenges that confront us as a Nation. And the challenges are big; these are big challenges. They are not Republican challenges, they are not Democrat challenges, they are American challenges.

And so, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to come and have the opportunity at the pleasure of the leadership to be able to come and talk a little bit about some positive things about America, some positive things that we have done, but also to provide some truth. Remember Senator Moynihan's comment, everyone is entitled to their own opinions but they are not entitled to their own facts. So we would like to bring some facts tonight about a couple different areas, primarily national security because it has been talked about just recently, and the issue of the economy, the economic perspective in our Nation. And I think it is extremely important that when we discuss this, that again we remember that truth and facts are important. And so I am going to present some information here that I hope that Members of the House are listening to. I hope that they are listening to, and, frankly, I hope that the American people are listening, because there is some information that I think that they will be extremely, extremely interested in, especially when we talk about votes as it relates to issues on the floor of the House.

So the Official Truth Squad is pleased to be able to come and talk a little bit about national security and about the economy.

Now, there is certainly no more important function of the Federal Government than the security of the American people. And Republicans, as everyone knows, have always been committed to national security. Our Nation's defense, our Homeland Security and border control and the global war on terror are not just priorities for this administration, but they are indeed priorities for all House Republicans. And if there were ever any question in anyone's mind about whether or not we are a Nation that remains at risk because of enemies around the world, then all one has to do is look to a very recent activity in England where the United States, along with our good friends in Great Britain and friends in Pakistan, were able to thwart a plan by our enemies, by our enemies who have sworn to make certain they end our way of life. We were able to thwart a plan to bring down many, many airliners that would kill thousands, thousands of innocent civilians.

So it is clear that the global war on terror is indeed a huge priority. It is a priority for us. I would hope that it would be a priority for all Members of the House. However, the Democrats continue to try to obstruct our security plans, and they have been essentially a party of ''no,'' with no alternative plans to meet our security needs. And I would ask, Madam Speaker, folks to remember just the hour that we have just heard by our good friends on the other side of the aisle, and try to recollect one single solution that was offered. Madam Speaker, I suspect that you, like I, can't remember it, because in fact there were no solutions that were offered.

For instance, Democrats have called time and time again for the redeployment of our troops. And there was a commentator or an interviewer on television recently who asked a member of the Democrat Caucus, where do you want them redeployed to? And he couldn't come up with an answer. But occasionally they will come up with an answer, and oftentimes they will say, well, they ought to be able to redeploy to Okinawa. Well, now there is a thought, Madam Speaker, redeploy the troops from Iraq to Okinawa. If you take a look at the globe, the port of Newport News and Norfolk is closer to Iraq than Okinawa. So redeployment of troops to Okinawa makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.

Now, the other side of the aisle, the Democrats are certainly good at saying no, but they are not good at laying forth alternative plans. What they don't seem to understand is the magnitude of the threat of terrorism or indeed what is at stake. Their leader has been quoted as saying, ''We don't even have a party position on the war.'' This is certainly evidenced by their inability to present a plan for combating terrorism in this remarkably difficult and changed post-9/11 world.

There is one Democrat leader who has in fact said that the global war on

terror isn't really all that relevant. Can you imagine, Madam Speaker, we have the remarkable activities in England just last month, the knowledge and understanding that our enemy is making plans day in and day out to try to kill innocent civilians across all free nations, to try to do their best to make certain that we end our way of life, that they end our way of life, and we have a Democrat leader in this House who says that the global war on terror isn't really all that relevant. Well, with a stance like that, our leader says, with a stance like that, it is easy to see why Capitol Hill Democrats have no record of accomplishment on national security issues and lack a coherent agenda on the biggest challenge of the day.

Just this month, House Republicans will continue to focus our floor action on important security issues. We will be authorizing the President's Terror Surveillance Program, which is designed to identify and disrupt terror cells planning to attack against the United States. This is the kind of program that was utilized to assist in the activities that foiled the plot in England.

Now, when I go home, Madam Speaker, I don't know about you, but when I go home and I talk to my constituents and they say, what on Earth are you all arguing about? How can it be that anybody in this Nation believes that we as a Nation don't have the responsibility, in fact don't have the absolute imperative to make certain that we are listening and hearing and determining what our enemies are saying if they are outside the United States? I have significant concern on privacy issues when you are talking about communication between a United States citizen in the United States and another United States citizen in the United States. That is a different issue, Madam Speaker. And when individuals confuse and confound those two, they do a disservice to every single American.

□ 2230

The issue is not whether or not that kind of communication is protected. The issue is, in fact, whether or not we, as elected representatives of constituents all across this Nation, will respond to what they believe, our constituents believe, Americans all across this Nation, is an imperative for our government to do, and that is to have a terrorism surveillance program that lets us know what the bad guys are going to do before they do it. Clearly that is the most effective means of combating the war on terror, is to make certain we know what our enemy is going to do before they do it and then stop them before they do it.

In the House this month, we will be authorizing military tribunals for suspected terrorists. These are noncitizens fighting under any flag. These are terrorists. They have proclaimed to kill you and me and end our way of life as a Nation. They are not fighting for a nation. They have never signed the Geneva Accords themselves. These are evil people who must be dealt with by different rules. This is unlike any war the world has ever seen. That is not to say that they ought to be treated inhumanely, but they need to be treated with different rules in order for us to gain the kind of information that we need, in addition to being able to hold these people who are interested in doing us great, great harm, great harm.

This month the House Republicans have passed a resolution to recognize the 5-year anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. As I go through these, I think it is important for Members of the House as well as Americans all across the Nation to appreciate as these votes come up, watch where the votes go, watch who is supporting these commonsense protections for the American people.

A resolution recognizing the 5-year anniversary of the 9/11 attack, we even had some Members on the other side of the aisle vote against that. They objected strenuously that it came to the floor of the House for a vote.

Strengthening border security. We had a debate on building a fence along the southern border to make sure that our Nation is secure. This week we will deal with some issues that will provide for allowing local law enforcement individuals, both State and local, the right and privilege to detain and retain illegals who come under their jurisdiction until the Federal Government comes and is able to deport them. Right now that is not the case. We will have a bill on the floor that will once and for all end the catch-and-release program that has been operating at the border.

I ask the American people to watch who is voting on these issues. There is no reason on Earth that we ought to apprehend an individual coming across our border illegally and then give him a piece of paper and say, you have to come back in 90 days and we will try you. They just blend into society.

A catch-and-release program does not work. There are over 400,000 individuals who have already in this Nation gone through the process. They were here illegally, they are found to be guilty of another crime and been ordered deported, and yet they are told to come back and report for their deportation date. And the catch-and-release program does not make any sense.

We will have on the floor this week a bill to provide for a catch-and-return policy, which means if they are apprehended coming into our Nation illegally, they are returned to their country of origin.

There was the discovery once again of another tunnel between San Diego or the San Diego area and Mexico. Apparently it was some 400 feet long, and it was used to smuggle drugs and contraband and illegals into the United States. That was just discovered. We will have a bill on the floor to strengthen the laws as it relates to the building of tunnels for the purpose of bringing drugs and smuggling aliens in.

We will have on the floor funding and protecting American troops, the defense authorization conference report, and defense and military quality of life appropriations conference reports, and then homeland security conference reports which will provide that funding for border security and for the barriers that I talked about.

And it is extremely important to watch who is voting for these things and who is opposing them. Oftentimes what we find is that individuals will say one thing at home, and then they come to Washington, and there is something in the air here that makes them do something different. We respectfully request that folks watch and see who is voting for what.

On the issue of border security, maintaining the integrity of our borders is an economic and a security concern. Americans are worried about the vulnerabilities at our borders, and House Republicans have passed several pieces of legislation to strengthen our borders, put more technology and personnel at the borders, and develop systems to ascertain who crosses the border and for what purposes. We need to know who is coming in to our Nation.

The Republican plan for border security focuses on providing more Border Patrol agents, strengthening security through additional fencing and infrastructure, stricter enforcement, and enhancing State and local law enforcement authority. These are the foundations that must be set before we can begin the next step of immigration reforms. It is imperative, the American people are demanding, that we put our priorities first on controlling the border, making certain we know who is coming into our Nation.

It ought not surprise anybody to get a little truth now, and that is that the Democrats have not supported the efforts to secure our borders. We passed the REAL ID Act, the act that provide for an appropriate form of identification for people traveling on an airplane. This would go a long way in identifying individuals here illegally, and 152 Democrats voted ''no,'' including the top two members of their leadership. They voted against the REAL ID Act.

We passed the Border Protection Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act, which was the bill that has been proclaimed by those individuals who truly know and appreciate what it is going to take to control and secure our border. They believe it is the most appropriate bill that has come through Congress, certainly more appropriate than the version that came out of the Senate. But on that bill, 164 Democrats oppose that bill, including the top two in their leadership.

So folks may say one thing at home, and when they come to Washington, they oftentimes do something completely different.

On our Nation's defense, people who fight for our freedom must be fully supported. The House Armed Services Committee and our Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense and Military Quality of Life have concentrated their efforts on making certain that we meet those needs, as well as helping transform the Department of Defense to meet the threats for the next century.

In the area of intelligence reform, this is where I talked about making certain that we know what the bad guys are going to do it before they do it. Republicans have worked with the administration and intelligence agencies to help transform our intelligence-gathering capabilities and analyzing system. Rather than accept that we need to focus our efforts on this kind of reform, Democrats instead want to focus on just attacking the administration. You hear it over and over again.

Madam Speaker, it is like a broken record. They have tried to discredit the terrorist surveillance program that we talked about and other policies which have helped protect our Nation from further attack. It is not a mistake or just a happenstance that we as a Nation have not been attacked since 9/11. There are incredible individuals working day and night to make certain that we are safe as a Nation.

The 9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act that was proposed in 2004, these are the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission that you hear people talking about on the other side of the aisle all the time and that we should implement them. We had the bill that implemented a significant portion of those, and what happened? A majority, 125 Democrats, including their leader, voting to oppose it, voted ''no'' to implement significant recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

So, Madam Speaker, remember, you are entitled to your own opinions, but are not entitled to your own facts.

The global war on terrorism is truly the most important activity, most important war of our generation, and it is a war like no other, as we have talked about. It is fought on many different levels: military, intelligence, economic, technology, cyberworld, Internet, all corners of the Earth.

Again, this is not a war that we sought. We didn't go out looking for this. It has been brought to our shores and brought to us, and there are terrorists out there who truly want to kill us, and they say that explicitly.

□ 2240

If you don't believe me, you just ought to listen to them. They are interested in murdering and killing innocent civilians and ending our way of life. If we do not take their words seriously and take them at their word, we do so at our peril. It is the simple and horrible truth, Madam Speaker. We must face this fact and employ all efforts, all efforts, to thwart their many attempts.

Oftentimes the Democrats will talk a good game on protecting the homeland; but when push come to shove, they certainly demonstrate that they don't understand the real issues that affect our homeland and our national security. Again, they have been the loud party of ''no,'' with no alternative plans to meet our security needs. And although we still cannot fully understand why the terrorists hate our way of life so much, we do understand this much: that we are in a real war.

Almost 5 years after the attacks on 9/11, Islamic extremist groups, jihadists, continue to represent the most immediate threat to the United States and to our allies and to our interests abroad. And at the urging of Osama bin Laden, every American man, woman, and child has become a legitimate target in their jihad. And, again, this is their words. It is not our conjecture. It is not our opinion. It is truth. It is fact.

Now, we are blessed with an absolutely outstanding military that has taken the battle to the enemy, and it is extremely important that we fight these battles at their point of origin. We have many good and faithful allies all around the globe, and we have taken that fight forward, supporting the governments of Iraq and Afghanistan in rooting out the enemy before he can strike again. And we are cooperating with friendly forces from the Philippines to Africa and from the Middle East to South America. And we are united. We are united against this threat.

But the United States, we remain a Nation at war. We are not safe simply because we have not seen an attack on U.S. soil since 9/11. We are safer today because of the professionals of the worldwide network of intelligence and military and law enforcement officials who continue to pressure and strike al Qaeda and its followers. And we must continue the pressure on these radical organizations until victory for all freedom-loving people of the world is assured. September 11, 2001, showed us the danger of Islamic jihadism, and it also taught us that deficiencies in our own system made it possible for terrorists to operate right under our noses.

Our most important duty, as Members of Congress, is to protect our Nation from ever experiencing that lesson again. And for that reason, we must, we must continue to focus on improving our national security, our homeland security, and our intelligence systems.

But, again, the fact of the matter is the Democrats do not seem to understand that the threat of terrorism exists or even what is at stake. Remember what their leader said, they do not even have a party position on the war and an individual in their leadership said they didn't think the global war on terror was really all that relevant.

Recently, just a couple weeks ago, their leader, in a press conference, made a stunning and contradictory assessment that capturing Osama bin Laden, the leader of al Qaeda, the terrorist organization responsible for numerous attacks against the United States, including those of 9/11, would ''not make America any safer.'' ''Even if he's caught tomorrow, she said, ''I don't think that makes us any safer.''

Now, with a stance like that, it is easy to see why Capitol Hill Democrats have no record of accomplishment on national security or their issues and that they lack a coherent agenda on the biggest challenge of the day for this Congress and, yes, this Nation.

As I mentioned, they have called for implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Over and over they have called, but repeatedly Capitol Hill Democrats have opposed legislation implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission meant to strengthen America's national security and to prevent further attacks.

The 9/11 Commission said: ''The government has made significant strides in using terrorism financing as an intelligence tool.'' So what happened on House Resolution 895, the legislation supporting intelligence and law enforcement programs that track terrorists and condemn with proper congressional oversight the publication of any classified information that could potentially impair the fight against terrorism, that is, implementing one of the 9/11 Commission recommendations? What happened? 174 Democrats voted ''no.'' 174 voted ''no.''

They call for the immediate implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. One of the 9/11 Commission recommendations was: ''The READ ID Act has established statute standards for State-issued IDs acceptable for Federal purposes, though States' compliance needs to be closely monitored.'' What happened with that bill that the 9/11 Commission said was a wise idea and ought to be adopted? 152 of our friends on the other side of the aisle voted ''no.'' 152.

They talk about immediately implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations. A quote from the 9/11 Commission: ''The House and Senate have taken positive steps, but Secretary Chertoff and his team still report to too many bosses. The House and Senate Homeland Security Committees should have exclusive jurisdiction over all counterterrorism functions of the Department of Homeland Security.'' That is a recommendation of the 9/11 Commission, a recommendation that our good friends say ought to be immediately implemented. So when the proposal comes up to do just that, a majority, 120 of them, vote ''no.''

Madam Speaker, you are entitled to your own opinions, but you are not entitled to your own facts.

So in the area of national security, I think it is clear. There is a party, there are leaders in this Congress on the Republican side of the aisle who understand the threat, understand the gravity of the situation, understand and appreciate that we have a real enemy, understand and appreciate that that real

enemy is interested in causing significant harm to our Nation and in murdering innocent civilians, and we are taking actions day in and day out, including this week, to make certain that we are more safe and more secure as a Nation.

So I challenge and call on my friends on the other side of the aisle to join us. Don't just talk about it. Don't just come down here and paint doom and gloom. There are people here who are working hard. Remember what Churchill said? ''Criticism is easy. Achievement is difficult.'' ''Achievement is difficult.'' So join us. You might find that being part of the solution instead of just railing against the individuals who are in positions of leadership now is actually beneficial, that your constituents actually appreciate the work that you are doing in a bipartisan manner. Boy, wouldn't that be wonderful? We certainly would welcome you to participate.

Madam Speaker, I talked about the concern that the Official Truth Squad has about all of the disinformation and the misinformation that goes on, and I was looking a little over a year ago for a quote. I am a fan of quotes. I enjoy quotes, and I think that oftentimes individuals in history have given us great perspective on our Nation and great perspective on our principles and the roots of our Nation. And the ''politics of division'' really irritates me, and I think it does a disservice to our Nation because we are so strong and we are united as a Nation.

But the other side of the aisle seems intent on tearing down, on dividing. You have heard some of it this evening. The extending tax cuts for millionaires you heard tonight and all sorts of remarkable divisive statements. The comment about the contractors in Iraq was a divisive statement, where we have hardworking American citizens who are putting their lives at risk and they get criticized in order for some divisive purpose, to try to gain some political points. Madam Speaker, it is just disheartening to hear that kind of conversation, and it does a disservice to our Nation.

When I attempted to find a quote that would crystallize that emotion, I came across this one, the Reverend William Boetcker, who was a leader and a public speaker in the late 19th and early 20th century. He was trying to crystallize the philosophy of Abraham Lincoln in his social philosophy, and it is one of my favorite quotes. He said: ''You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot encourage the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred.''

□ 2250

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence. And you cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could do for themselves.

And so, Madam Speaker, I turn now to addressing the issue of vision and addressing the issue of the economy. House Republicans have realized, certainly do realize the importance of developing and having a vision to focus our efforts and to ensure that we address what is important for the American people. And we came together and highlighted a vision earlier this year that would address this new American century. And we came up with the following vision. We will promote dignity and future of every individual. It is important to talk about the individual. Madam Speaker, often times you hear the folks on the other side of the aisle talk about groups of folks. And again they like to separate people into groups so that they can divide and conquer.

But it is the individual, it is the individual who makes things great. So we will promote the dignity and the future of every individual by building a free society, under a limited, accountable government that protects our liberty, our security, and our prosperity for a brighter American dream.

Now, the Democrats had no such vision. Again, they are the ''party of no,'' they have got no plan to lead the Nation. That is a dangerous way to try to take over the majority of the House of Representatives. And it is clear. We heard it again tonight. Their actions are guided by politics and discrediting the administration over and over again rather than focusing on a positive agenda for the American people.

Again that is the kind of information and the kind of requests that I get at home when I talk to my constituents about a passion for a positive agenda for America. Because, we are a great, great Nation. And we work so well together when we work unified. And that is what folks at home tell me that they would desire, that we move together forward in unity.

Now, I want to talk a little bit about our economy. And I think it is important to appreciate that our economy today is truly remarkably strong. And the numbers prove that. Our Nation has bounced back from the blow that the economy took following the attacks of 9/11. Our unemployment is low. Home ownership across all sectors of our society is the highest it has ever been.

And recently, as I know in your home state, Madam Speaker, the gas prices are falling. Now, we got a lot of criticism for the gas prices going up, so we ought to take a fair amount of credit for them coming down. The most recent economic numbers are truly remarkable.

Although this chart is a little old, the trends are absolutely accurate and correct. Unemployment. The Employment gains continue. 128,000 new payroll jobs were created in August, A total of 5.7 million new jobs since August of 2003.

The unemployment rate is at a point, at a level of 4.7 percent, 4.7 percent. I know that there are some economist amongst our midst who understand and appreciate that full employment is basically 5 percent, used to be 6 percent a number of decades ago, but they revised it downward to 5 percent being full employment. That means that basically folks who are interested having a job have a job.

GDP growth for the second quarter was revised up to 2.9 from an earlier estimate of 2.5 percent. Gasoline prices have fallen recently with the average regular unleaded gasoline falling to below $2.70 a gallon. I know in my area it is $2.22 cents when I drove to the airport this moving to come here.

Oil apparently today was down to less than $62 a barrel, which is a significant move downward. And, Madam Speaker, this is due, these numbers are due to the policies put in place by this Republican Congress and our effort to spur the economy and lay the foundation for the economy of the next century.

Now, elections are coming up. I know that is a surprise to some. But if you heard the kind of comments made earlier on the floor this evening you can tell that elections are coming up. But the American people understand that elections are about choices, and they are about the future. And there is a clear choice between Republicans who are working to enact serious reforms that will grow our economy, and reduce the deficit, and Capitol Hill Democrats who are interested in spending more of America's taxpayer dollars on wasteful Government programs as they see fit.

Now, I want to point out two things on this and the next poster. This poster here has the years down on the lower portion here, 2000–2006. And it has, this blue line here is the number of new jobs created, the number of new jobs created. And since August of 2003, this has 5.3, it is actually 5.7 million new jobs created in that period of time.

There is a vertical dotted green line here. And that vertical dotted green line marks the point where the tax decreases, the appropriate and fair tax decreases for the American people were enacted by this administration and by this Congress. And since that point, what you have seen, again, here is jobs growth going down. Tax decreases put into place, and jobs go up.

These red bars are business investment in these quarters. See business investment down, which means a slower economy, not as many jobs, not as much economic activity or growth. What happens when appropriate, fair tax decreases are put in place? The economy flourishes. No mistake about it. It occurs every time that significant tax reduction is put in place, has been put in place over the last 50 years in our Nation.

President Kennedy knew it. It occurred when he instituted appropriate tax decreases. President Reagan knew it. It occurred when he instituted tax decreases, and occurred with president George W. Bush with the appropriate tax decreases of 2003.

Now, I think it is important to appreciate that the other side truly has no plan for the economy. In fact they have not proposed any plans to address the mandatory programs, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, those things that are on automatic pilot that now comprise about 54 percent of the budget, and unless they are addressed in relatively short order they will cause a significantly greater drain on the economy, decrease the economic growth and activity that we have seen.

The other side is literally blind and has not proposed any proposals to improve or to reform those spending programs. In fact, what they have done is to propose in the last fiscal year 2006 budget, these were their proposals, these were the things that they actually did write down and bring to committees and bring to the floor of the House, new spending to the tune of $21.5 billion, and new taxes, new taxes to the tune of $54 billion with again no savings, no savings in Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, those items that if nothing is doing to those three items by 2030, they will consume the entire budget, the entire budget.

So it is not something that you can just say, well, do not worry about it, we do not have to do anything to those items because they will take care of themselves.

Over the past 4 years, if the Democrats had been in control, they talk about their desire to take control of the House and to lead, well, what would have happened if they would have been in control for the last 4 years and had their proposals put in place?

If they had been in control, discretionary spending would have increased by over $106 billion. Amazingly, although they talk a good game, they have voted consistently against any significant budget reform efforts.

The Deficit Reduction Act, that bill that was passed earlier this bill that saved approximately $40 billion, $40 billion saved, the Democrats unanimously, unanimously voted against that bill, the Deficit Reduction Act.

In fact, one of their leaders was heard to say something like, we are not going to give them a single vote on this, and said it with great pride. Again, that is that politics of division, that desire to not be productive, to not be positive about solutions as they come forward here in the Congress.

□ 2300

What about the line item veto? When I go home, I hear folks talk about budgetary improvements we could make here in Washington. Many of them ask about the line item veto, why can't we allow the administration, any administration, to pick those items in the budget and say no, we ought not be spending money on that specific item. Good idea. I have supported it. The vast majority of my colleagues on the Republican side have supported it.

What happened when the bill came here to the floor for a vote? Well, Madam Speaker, the vote occurred earlier this year, rollcall vote 317, and the number of individuals on their side of the aisle supporting it, 35. The vast majority, 156, voting no.

That is the line item veto. That is one of those proposals that you hear them talk about all the time, wanting to make certain that the line item veto is passed. But when given the opportunity, when given the opportunity to stand up and say yes, that is exactly what we want to do, what do they say? No. ''No, we don't believe that we ought to have that kind of reform,'' even though that is what they say when they go home.

Earmark reform. What about earmark reform? We had the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act. These are the special projects put into bills. We have had a couple of votes on this.

The first one that we had earlier, H.R. 4975, 192 Democrats vote no, including their top two members of their leadership.

Recently all it was was a sunshine bill. It said that if you are going to put a special project into the budget, that you ought to put your name beside it. I had a bill that I called ''sunshine for earmarks.'' It said that if you are going to have a special project in an appropriations bill, that you ought to have to put your name beside it so that your constituents know you put it in there and they can look at it and say yes, this is what we want our Member of Congress to do, or no, we don't think that is something that he or she ought to be doing, so the colleagues here, Members' colleagues in the House, can know where these kinds of requests are coming from. It is important. It is important to have that kind of sunshine.

It is a simple, simple proposal. It is important for the press to know so that when they are providing their oversight of the fourth estate, that in fact they know who has put these items in.

So what kind of vote did we get? Again, this is a proposal that they talk about all the time. ''If we could just have some earmark reform.'' So we bring it to the floor, call for a vote, it passes because the vast majority of colleagues on my side of the aisle, our side of the aisle, the Republican side of the aisle supported it. But what did those folks on the other side do? 147 of them, the vast majority voted no, including 15 ranking members. These are Members who are the most senior members on the committees in the United States House of Representatives. These are the individuals, if the other side were to by some chance take over and gain the majority, these are the individuals who would be chairmen. They would be chairs of the committees.

And what do they say with their vote, the vast majority? They say no, we don't want earmark reform. We don't want special project reform. We may say we do, but we really don't. We don't believe it in so much that when given the opportunity to vote for it, they vote no. And the leadership, what did the leadership do? Voted no. That is what they did on the other side of the aisle.

So, Madam Speaker, every single Member, every single individual is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts, and these are the facts about who is truly interested in budgetary reform and earmark reform.

To make matters worse, they are more than eager to raise your taxes. You hear the code words, and the code words recently have become ''shared sacrifice.'' Have you heard that, Madam Speaker, ''shared sacrifice?''

What that means is raising your taxes, because they believe that they know how to spend your money better than you. That is one of the principles that they have about how they plan to grow the government, how they plan to cover all these special projects and programs that they wish to have adopted. That would have not only a horrible impact on the economy, but it would also give them even more revenue, increased revenue in the government to spend.

Madam Speaker, when I hear the other side talk, if you just listen to them, you get so doggone depressed. But I am optimistic about the future of this Nation. I am optimistic about this economy.

The United States has the number one economy in the world, and in order to assure that vibrant economy in the 21st century, we in the House have focused on a comprehensive set of policies and incentives that will build on a solid economic foundation.

This won't be accomplished by Federal funds though, because Federal funds don't solve that kind of challenge. That is done by private capital. The private sector, not government bureaucrats, know how money should be spent, what resources are needed and what type of training workers will require. Unfortunately, unfortunately, there are way too many government roadblocks that stand in the way of business development and that deter investment, both here and abroad.

There are steps that we can take and we will take to restore our Nation's competitiveness and ensure that America remains the land of opportunity. We are not the status quo party. The Republicans are not the status quo party. We are the party of change, we are the party of vision, we are the party of entrepreneurship, we are the party of individual responsibility, we are the party of success.

So we will work to address health care security, termination of bureaucratic red tape, lifelong learning, trade fairness and opportunity, tax relief and

simplification, energy self-sufficiency and security, innovation and investment, and ending lawsuit abuse and litigation management.

I tell you, Madam Speaker, that is an agenda that the American people can be proud of. It is an agenda that the American people can embrace with enthusiasm, with optimism, with passion, not with a dour look on your face and say ''woe is me, isn't the world awful.''

These are the exciting kind of proposals. These are exciting proposals that we will put forward before the House as we continue our leadership, our strong leadership, to bring about increasing American competitiveness.

For 3 years, House Republicans have promoted the House economic competitiveness agenda. This year alone we have passed over 39 pieces of legislation that will help make America more competitive. We have real solutions. Republicans offer real solutions. We invite our colleagues to join us in moving America forward and providing an opportunity for the United States businesses and working families.

But instead, they have no plan, and instead of working with us at the committee level or on the House floor, the Democrats have tried to undermine the economic competitiveness agenda over and over and over again.

Again, their so-called innovative agenda is not innovative. It is a call for increased government spending, presumably fueled by increased taxes. In response to our economic agenda, at so many different points they have been nothing but obstructionists over and over again.

For example, college access for all. They say they are for expanding access to college, yet they voted against the College Access and Opportunity Act, 181 of them, including the top two leaders in their party, 181 of them voted against the College Access and Opportunity Act.

Energy independence, Democrats say they want to end our dependence on foreign oil, and yet they try to obstruct every single plan to access America's own oil and natural gas reserves, such as tapping into ANWR and the OCS.

The Energy Policy Act, 183 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act, 176 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. And the Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act, 156 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no.

Affordable health care, a difficult challenge for so many large and small businesses around our Nation, Democrats say they want to help employers provide health insurance to their employees. But they vote against every single measure to do so. The HEALTH Act, 185 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. Small Business Health Fairness Act, 165 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. And recently, the Health Information Technology Promotion Act, something that would truly streamline health care for our Nation, 139 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. So, Madam Speaker, it truly is a remarkable contrast between the two parties.

I want to put up one more chart, because when you think about what would happen if the other side were in fact to be in the majority, I get questions at home, what would they do? What would they do?

Again, elections are about choices and they are about the future, and to determine what they would do, all you have to do is look at the legislation that they have proposed, the legislation they proposed. I presume that is what they would do, don't you, Madam Speaker?

□ 2310

The top two bills that they have proposed, H. Res. 635 and H. Res. 636, the first step in impeaching President Bush resolution and the second step in impeaching President Bush resolution.

Madam Speaker, I do not believe that the American people are interested in leadership in this House of Representatives that has as its number one priority the impeachment of the President of the United States. That is not what the American people are interested in.

What else are they interested in? H.R. 4683, the Federal Health Care System Government-Run Health Care Act. House Democrats want to create a Federal health care system without choices, which would combine the efficiency of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the compassion of the IRS, and they would tax Americans to get to it. They would amend the Social Security Act, the bill would, to impose on the income of every individual a tax equal to 1.7 percent of wages received, and on every employer an excise tax of 7 percent of the wages paid to each employee, and on the self-employment income of every individual a tax equal to the applicable percentage of the self-employment income for such taxable year. Who cosponsors that? Ranking Democrats, remember, the individuals who would be chairmen of the committees, ranking Democrats and senior members of the Democrat Caucus.

Madam Speaker, I do not think that is what Americans are bargaining for. That is not what I hear my constituents say they want when I go home and talk to them which is every single week. They are not interested in the Federal Government running health care.

H.R. 1018, it is called the Permanent Welfare Housing Act. I call it the welfare reform repeal Act. Public housing, this bill would remove provisions that residents of public housing are required to participate in 8 hours per month of either community service or economic self-sufficiency activities in order to retain their public housing. Who are the sponsors? The ranking Democrats, remember folks who would be chairmen of these committees, and multiple, multiple senior Democrat Members.

Madam Speaker, one of the most incredible and productive and positive pieces of legislation that has passed through this Congress in the past 12 years has been welfare reform. It has put literally millions of Americans back to work, to be productive citizens, to have pride in what they are doing, to believe that they have some worth and they have some input into the productivity of this Nation. What is it that the other side wants to do? Well, they want to repeal portions of it that would provide that kind of sense of accomplishment and sense of participation.

So, Madam Speaker, Republicans understand that it is the American people who built this Nation, American people who built this economy and made this the land of opportunity. Washington's job as the people's representative is to provide national and economic security and to give each individual the freedom and the protection to pursue their American dream.

The imagination and hard work of the American people have built this wonderful and beautiful Nation, and they have made it prosperous. Our task as Members of the United States Congress is to ensure that this remains true for the next century.

Once again, the other side relies on the vague promises and big government programs to solve every perceived problem in the United States. Government is not the answer, and this philosophy, which is truly left over from previous bureaucratic administrations of the 1960s and 1970s, has only slowed down progress in our Nation every single time it has been instituted.

Madam Speaker, we live in a glorious Nation. It is a wondrous Nation, a Nation that is still seen by men and women around the world as a beacon of liberty and repository of hope. I am incredibly proud to serve in the United States House of Representatives and to have the opportunity to share this positive perspective and this positive vision with my colleagues and with the Nation as we have done tonight.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. LYNCH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. MCGOVERN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of September 18 on account of the death of his father.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKELTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BISHOP of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ETHERIDGE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. COOPER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BAIRD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DOYLE, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, September 20.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, September 20 and 21.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, today and September 20.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and September 20, 21, and 22.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, September 20, 21, and 22.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today and September 25.

Mr. BOUSTANY, for 5 minutes, September 21 and 22.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today and September 20, 21, and 22.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WESTMORELAND, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2463. An act to designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Recreation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources; in addition to the Committee on Agriculture for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reports that on September 18, 2006, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 866. to make technical corrections to the United States Code.

H.R. 2808. To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 20, 2006, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

9475. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Navigation and Navigable Waters; Technical, Organizational, and Conforming Amendments [USCG-2006-25150] (RIN: 1625-ZA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9476. A letter from the General Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Public Assistance Eligibility [Docket ID FEMA-2006-0028] (RIN: 1660-AA45) received August 14, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9477. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of New Port of Entry at Sacramento, California; Realignment of the Port Limits of the Port of Entry at San Francisco, California [CBP Dec. 06-23] received September 5, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9478. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zones; Captain of the Port of Zone Jacksonville, FL [COTP Jacksonville 06-164] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9479. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Confidentiality of Commercial Information [CBP Dec. 06-24] (RIN: 1651-AA57) received September 11, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9480. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Yankee Homecoming Fireworks, Newburyport, MA [CGD01-06-037] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9481. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Lynch Wedding Fireworks Display, Marblehead, MA [CGD01-06-061] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9482. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Vermont Air National Guard 60th Anniversary Air Show, Burlington Bay, Burlington, VT [CGD01-06-098] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9483. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Great Lakes Water Sport Expo, Buffalo Outer Harbor, Buffalo, NY [CGD09-06-117] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9484. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pentwater Homecoming Fireworks, Pentwater, MI [CGD09-06-135] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9485. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Beverly Homecoming Fireworks, Beverly, MA [CGD01-06-017] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9486. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Celebrate Erie, Erie, PA [CGD09-06-146] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9487. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; New Tacoma Narrows Bridge Construction Project, Construction Vessels and Equipment Under and in Immediate Vicinity of West Span, Tacoma Narrows, Gig Harbor, WA [CGD13-06-025] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9488. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulation: Annual Dragon Boat Races, Portland, Oregon [CGD13-06-007] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9489. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department

of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Patapsco River, Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD [CGD05-06-043] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9490. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; March of Dimes Paddle Erie, Erie, PA [CGD09-06-147] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received August 17, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9491. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Susquehanna River, Port Deposit, MD [CGD05-06-042] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9492. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Atlantic Ocean, Ocean City, MD [CGD05-06-064] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9493. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Event, Bogue Sound, Morehead City, North Carolina [CGD05-06-057] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9494. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; N.E. 14th Street Bridge, Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, mile 1055.0, Pompano, FL. [CGD07-05-162] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9495. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA. [CGD13-06-015] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9496. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (Alternate Route), Great Dismal Swamp Canal, South Mills, NC [CGD05-06-017] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9497. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Townsend Gut, Boothbay and Southport, ME [CGD01-06-019] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9498. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations, Seattle Seafair, Lake Washington, WA [CGD13-06-038] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

9499. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Atlantic Ocean, Atlantic City, NJ, Change of Time [CGD05-06-037] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received August 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. POMBO: Committee on Resources. H.R. 5622. A bill to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109–665). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. EHLERS: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 4844. A bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 109–666). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 5811. A bill to implement the Protocol of 1997 to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109–667). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 3849. A bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to implement pesticide-related obligations of the United States under the international conventions or protocols known as the PIC Convention, the POPs Convention, and the LRTAP POPs Protocol (Rep. 109–668). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 5483. A bill to increase the disability earning limitation under the Railroad Retirement Act and to index the amount of allowable earnings consistent with increases in the substantial gainful activity dollar amount under the Social Security Act (Rept. 109–669). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mrs. CAPITO: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1015. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4844) to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections, and for other purposes (Rept. 109–670). Referred to the House Calendar.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII the following action was taken by the Speaker:

[Omitted from the Record of September 15, 2006]

H.R. 4777. Referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce extended for a period ending not later than September 22, 2006.

[The following action occurred on September 18, 2006]

H.R. 6054. Referral to the Committees on the Judiciary and International Relations extended for a period ending not later than September 22, 2006.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. STEARNS (for himself and Mr. PENCE):

H.R. 6092. A bill to provide that no Federal funds may be used for the design, renovation, construction, or rental of any headquarters for the United Nations in any location in the United States unless the President transmits to Congress a certification that the United Nations has adopted internationally-recognized best practices in contracting and procurement; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. STEARNS (for himself, Mr. BASS, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 6093. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to require the disclosure of information relating to the fair market value and safety of damaged motor vehicles; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 6094. A bill to restore the Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to detain dangerous aliens, to ensure the removal of deportable criminal aliens, and combat alien gang crime; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 6095. A bill to affirm the inherent authority of State and local law enforcement to assist in the enforcement of immigration laws, to provide for effective prosecution of alien smugglers, and to reform immigration litigation procedures; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BUYER (for himself, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Ms. HERSETH):

H.R. 6096. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. OTTER, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. HOSTETTLER):

H.R. 6097. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to allow additional transit systems greater flexibility with certain mass transportation projects; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BARROW (for himself, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. POMEROY, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MELANCON, and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 6098. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to eliminate funding shortfalls for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for fiscal year

2007; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. AKIN, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CANNON, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. EHLERS, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. FOXX, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. GOODE, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. HERGER, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. TERRY, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. PENCE, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. PITTS, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. RENZI, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California):

H.R. 6099. A bill to ensure that women seeking an abortion are fully informed regarding the pain experienced by their unborn child; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 6100. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for certain servicemembers to become eligible for educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CANNON:

H.R. 6101. A bill to amend the Legal Services Corporation Act to provide appropriate removal procedures for the Inspector General, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia (for himself, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. WOLF, Mr. BOUCHER, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H.R. 6102. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Lawyers Road, NW in Vienna, Virginia, as the ''Captain Christopher Petty Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania (for himself, Ms. HART, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MURTHA, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. DENT, Mr. SHERWOOD, and Mr. KANJORSKI):

H.R. 6103. A bill to amend the Act establishing the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area in order to include Butler County, Pennsylvania, within the boundaries of that heritage area; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. FARR (for himself and Mr. SAXTON):

H.R. 6104. A bill to build operational readiness in civilian agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. HERSETH:

H.R. 6105. A bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to help ensure that no Service hospital or outpatient health facility is closed unless Congressional reporting requirements regarding the hospital or facility are current; to the Committee on Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JINDAL (for himself, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

H.R. 6106. A bill to extend the waiver authority for the Secretary of Education under title IV, section 105, of Public Law 109-148; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. MALONEY (for herself, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. NADLER):

H.R. 6107. A bill to authorize appropriations for the purpose of establishing an office within the Internal Revenue Service to focus on violations of the internal revenue laws by persons who are under investigation for conduct relating to commercial sex acts, to establish a Whistleblower Office within the Internal Revenue Service, and to increase the criminal monetary penalty limitations for the underpayment or overpayment of tax due to fraud; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. SHIMKUS):

H.R. 6108. A bill to authorize the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to make grants to communities to be used for outreach efforts to encourage participation in the national flood insurance program; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. SALAZAR, Ms. HART, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. HOEKSTRA, and Mr. LAHOOD):

H.R. 6109. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for enhanced protection of sensitive personal information processed or maintained by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 6110. A bill to require persons seeking Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval for a liquefied natural gas facility to identify employees and agents engaged in activities to persuade communities of the benefits of such approval; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 6111. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the Tax Court may review claims for equitable innocent spouse relief and to suspend the running on the period of limitations while such claims are pending; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 6112. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain lands in Denali National Park in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.J. Res. 95. A joint resolution recognizing the 66th anniversary of the Battle of Attu and the end of Imperial Japanese control of the Aleutian Islands of Alaska during World War II and urging the Secretary of the Interior to work to protect the historic sites associated with the battle and the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Ms. FOXX:

H.J. Res. 96. A joint resolution recognizing the contributions of the Christmas tree industry to the United States economy and urging the Secretary of Agriculture to establish programs to raise awareness of the importance of the Christmas tree industry; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. DREIER, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HALL, Ms. HART, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. MCNULTY, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. MYRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. OWENS, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. REYES, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mr. WYNN):

H. Con. Res. 476. Concurrent resolution supporting the observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BARROW:

H. Res. 1014. A resolution recognizing the life of Erskine ''Erk'' Russell and his outstanding contributions to the University of Georgia, Georgia Southern University, the State of Georgia, and the United States; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H. Res. 1016. A resolution encouraging all offices of the House of Representatives to hire disabled veterans; to the Committee on House Administration.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 284: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 339: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire.
H.R. 389: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 408: Mr. NUNES.
H.R. 475: Ms. PELOSI.
H.R. 550: Mr. BACA.
H.R. 566: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 583: Mr. DUNCAN.
H.R. 602: Mr. SWEENEY and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 668: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 699: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 759: Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.
H.R. 817: Mr. POE.
H.R. 898: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 910: Mr. RUSH, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 941: Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 959: Mr. HOSTETTLER.
H.R. 997: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.
H.R. 1059: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1070: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 1227: Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 1245: Ms. Velázquez, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 1298: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 1310: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1356: Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee.
H.R. 1376: Ms. HERSETH, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1415: Ms. WATSON.
H.R. 1426: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 1472: Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. OWENS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. NADLER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 1498: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 1506: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. ETHERIDGE.
H.R. 1517: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1554: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 1588: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 1649: Mr. MOORE of Kansas.
H.R. 1688: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1694: Ms. BALDWIN.
H.R. 1951: Mr. CASTLE and Mr. KIRK.
H.R. 1994: Mr. BROWN of Ohio.
H.R. 2051: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina and Mr. HOEKSTRA.
H.R. 2052: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 2053: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 2076: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 2184: Mr. DEFAZIO and Mr. STARK.
H.R. 2317: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2567: Mr. BAIRD and Mr. WELLER.
H.R. 2631: Ms. HOOLEY.
H.R. 2716: Mr. STRICKLAND.
H.R. 2719: Mr. DELAHUNT.
H.R. 2877: Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 2939: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 3006: Mr. CONYERS and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3248: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 3326: Mr. COSTA and Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 3406: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3715: Ms. BALDWIN and Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 3954: Mr. REYES.
H.R. 4033: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 4198: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4215: Mrs. MCCARTHY.
H.R. 4217: Mrs. EMERSON.
H.R. 4239: Mr. GRAVES.
H.R. 4597: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. EVERETT, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 4727: Mr. FOLEY.
H.R. 4751: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 4824: Mr. OSBORNE.
H.R. 4830: Mr. MCKEON, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. BILBRAY, and Mr. DOOLITTLE.
H.R. 4844: Mr. SOUDER.
H.R. 4910: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. PITTS.
H.R. 4924: Mr. KIND, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. BERRY, Mr. EHLERS, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MARSHALL, and Ms. HOOLEY.
H.R. 4992: Mr. BOUCHER and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 5014: Mr. WEXLER and Ms. HERSETH.
H.R. 5072: Mr. FILNER.
H.R. 5099: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H.R. 5108: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 5148: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 5150: Mr. ACKERMAN.
H.R. 5171: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio.
H.R. 5242: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mrs. CUBIN.
H.R. 5291: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 5295: Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. CARTER, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 5312: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 5313: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 5390: Mr. HAYWORTH.
H.R. 5399: Mr. WALSH, Mr. MICA, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 5420: Mr. LEACH.
H.R. 5436: Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 5472: Mr. HALL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SIMMONS, and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio.
H.R. 5476: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.
H.R. 5483: Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 5519: Mr. SIMMONS.
H.R. 5533: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 5554: Mrs. BIGGERT.
H.R. 5555: Mrs. KELLY and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 5562: Mr. MATHESON, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 5624: Ms. BERKLEY and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island.
H.R. 5635: Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 5685: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 5704: Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 5707: Mr. STRICKLAND.
H.R. 5740: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 5746: Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. OTTER, and Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 5755: Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 5770: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 5771: Mr. STUPAK and Mr. LATHAM.
H.R. 5772: Mr. LEACH.
H.R. 5817: Ms. LEE.
H.R. 5834: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. STARK, and Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 5836: Mr. GORDON, Mr. BOUCHER, and Mr. FILNER.
H.R. 5844: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. JONES of North Carolina.
H.R. 5850: Mr. OSBORNE, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 5853: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 5862: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H.R. 5866: Mr. PORTER.
H.R. 5890: Mr. SOUDER.
H.R. 5891: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 5916: Mr. OBEY.
H.R. 5929: Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WELLER, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. KIRK.
H.R. 5941: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 5948: Mr. BERMAN, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 5960: Mr. EVANS, Mr. FILNER, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Ms. CARSON.
H.R. 5965: Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FILNER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. EMANUEL, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island.
H.R. 5983: Mr. KUCINICH.
H.R. 5989: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. EMANUEL, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HYDE, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WELLER, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT.
H.R. 5990: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. EMANUEL, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HYDE, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WELLER, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT.
H.R. 5992: Mr. STARK.
H.R. 6038: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, and Mr. STARK.
H.R. 6045: Mrs. KELLY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 6046: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. KUCINICH.
H.R. 6054: Ms. GRANGER and Mrs. Schmidt.
H.R. 6057: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOODE, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. ISTOOK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. MACK, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. ISSA, Mr. HALL, and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.
H.R. 6063: Mr. RAMSTAD.
H.R. 6064: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 6078: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CARTER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. THORNBERRY, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. POE, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BONILLA, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HALL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. REYES, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. PAUL, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 6080: Mr. OBERSTAR.
H.R. 6083: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. CARSON, Mr. OWENS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.J. Res. 58: Mr. BONILLA.
H. Con. Res. 174: Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. MCCARTHY, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Con. Res. 222: Mr. DOYLE.
H. Con. Res. 348: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H. Con. Res. 452: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. STARK, and Mr. CONYERS.
H. Con. Res. 465: Mr. WOLF, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. PICKERING.
H. Con. Res. 469: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 470: Mr. STARK and Mr. PALLONE.
H. Con. Res. 471: Mr. DICKS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. BURGESS, Ms. HART, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. GINGREY.
H. Res. 533: Mr. WEXLER.
H. Res. 622: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.
H. Res. 745: Mr. SHAW, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. KUHL of New York.
H. Res. 759: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H. Res. 825: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H. Res. 874: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H. Res. 888: Ms. BALDWIN and Mr. FARR.
H. Res. 940: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H. Res. 943: Mr. EHLERS.
H. Res. 944: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. LEE, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. STARK, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. KIND, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. POMEROY.
H. Res. 959: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H. Res. 962: Mr. DELAHUNT and Mr. REYNOLDS.
H. Res. 964: Mr. STARK and Mr. DOYLE.
H. Res. 973: Mr. FATTAH.
H. Res. 984: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
H. Res. 988: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. PEARCE.
H. Res. 990: Mr. STARK, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. PAYNE.

H. Res. 992: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. FARR, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LEACH, Mr. LOBIONDO, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. SOUDER, and Ms. WATERS.

H. Res. 999: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H. Res. 1001: Mr. KINGSTON.

H. Res. 1012: Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ OF CALIFORNIA.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 65: Mr. RUSH.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2006 No. 117

Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, a nation turns its heart and mind to You. Give hope to those who are underpaid and overworked. Sustain the lonely and empty, particularly those who have lost loved ones in the defense of freedom. Fill the vacuum created by such sadness with Your presence, lest loneliness shackle their faith.

Today, bless our Senators. You know their needs. Supply them from Your celestial bounty. Show them duties left undone. Strengthen them to resist temptation in all of its enticements and to walk the narrow way of discipline that leads to life. Enrich them with Your powerful presence and keep them faithful.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS.)

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, D.C., September 19, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DEMINT thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Today, following the opening remarks of the two leaders, we will have a 30-minute period of morning business. Following that time, we will return to the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement for closing remarks. The agreement provides for a vote on passage at 12 noon today, and that will be the first vote of the day. The Senate will then recess from 12:30 to 2:15 to allow the weekly policy meetings to occur.

When the Senate resumes business at 2:15, we will proceed to executive session for the consideration of the Alice Fisher nomination. We have an order for 5½ hours of debate on the Fisher nomination prior to the vote on confirmation. We expect some of that time to be yielded back, and we will vote on that nomination this evening before adjourning.

Last night, I filed a cloture motion on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6061, the Secure Fence Act of 2006. That cloture vote will occur on Wednesday morning, and we hope we can invoke cloture and dispose of this bill quickly.

OMAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I wish to take a few moments to comment on the bill we will be voting on later this morning, the Oman Free Trade Agreement.

On June 29, the Senate passed the Oman Free Trade Agreement by a vote of 60 to 34. Today, we will bring the Oman Free Trade Agreement to the floor again for final passage of the House bill.

We have a long history with Oman. Our relationship has extended for nearly 200 years. It dates back to 1833, when a treaty of friendship and navigation was signed with Muscat. Oman was the first Arab country to send an ambassador to the United States.

Over the years, Oman has offered us valuable support. When we needed a local airbase for an attempt to rescue U.S. Embassy hostages in Iran during the Carter administration, Oman volunteered. When we needed a safe ground for our troops during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom, Oman volunteered.

Today, Oman cooperates closely with us and other allies on counterterrorism and has publicly supported the democratic transition in Iraq. Although not a formal member of the coalition, Oman has been a committed, dependent ally in the global war on terror.

In Oman, we have found a solid partner on terrorist finance issues. Oman partners with its neighbors on transborder terror threats, and Oman's Government and religious leaders consistently and courageously denounce acts of terror and religious intolerance.

It is clear that through nearly 200 years of formal relations, we have enjoyed a close and cooperative partnership that continues to expand.

The free-trade agreement before us builds on the progress already made. It strengthens our relationship with a key friend and ally in the region, and it is a model for free trade in the entire Persian Gulf region.

It is not our first bilateral agreement in the region. We struck similar deals with Jordan in 2000, with Morocco in 2004, and with Bahrain in 2005. Like these earlier deals, the Oman agreement will open and expand opportunities for exports of many American products. America's workers, manufacturers, consumers, farmers, ranchers, and service providers will all benefit.

As soon as the agreement takes effect, Oman and the United States will provide each other immediate duty-

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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free access on virtually all products in our tariff schedules. This includes all consumer and industrial products. We will phase out tariffs on the remaining products within 10 years. Former Trade Representative Rob Portman called it ''a high-quality, comprehensive free trade agreement that will contribute to economic growth and trade.''

Unfortunately, some have sought to undermine the agreement. They have propagated myths that don't stand up to scrutiny. For example, despite claims to the contrary, Oman does not implement any aspect of the Arab boycott of Israel. Oman publicly affirms and has reaffirmed its position in a letter from its Commerce Minister in September 2005. Moreover, Oman neither tolerates nor allows the use of slave labor. Oman has made substantial commitments to the United States on labor reform, and it has promised to enact key reforms by October 31, 2006.

Rejecting the trade agreement would send a strong negative signal to our friends in the Middle East. Oman is a forward-looking Arab country on a range of social and economic issues. We must demonstrate our support to Oman, just as Oman has supported us.

As the 9/11 Commission advised, expanding trade with the Middle East will ''encourage development, more open societies, and opportunities for people to improve the lives of their families.'' Passing the agreement before us will promote economic reform and development in the Persian Gulf, and it will advance our goal of a freer and more open Middle East. Quite simply, it will move our allies forward, and it will move America forward.

I urge my colleagues to demonstrate their commitment to these goals by voting to pass the Oman Free Trade Agreement later this morning.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 30 minutes, with the first half of the time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, and the second half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for the minority side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I commend my colleague, Senator DORGAN of North Dakota, for a hearing he held yesterday. It was a hearing of the Democratic Policy Conference. This is the 10th hearing he has held. I attended with several other Senators. The hearings are held on Monday because they cannot be held during the ordinary course of business of the Senate.

The reason, I am afraid, is very clear. Senator DORGAN is considering an issue which no other committee in Congress will consider. Senator DORGAN is raising questions which no other committee on Capitol Hill will even suggest. Senator DORGAN and the Democratic Policy Conference are calling witnesses to testify openly on issues which the majority in this Republican-led Congress will not even consider. What could that possibly be? It turns out to be the conduct of our war in Iraq and, particularly, the waste and mismanagement of Federal tax dollars.

Yesterday, there were several former employees of Halliburton. We all know them now; they are infamous. This is the company with the no-bid contracts—$7 billion worth—and friends in high places all over this administration. This is the company which made millions of dollars off of taxpayer funds and, sadly, often at the expense of our soldiers.

Yesterday, the testimony was very clear. There was one witness who talked about this fitness center that was put up for our troops and an Internet center for our troops, and Halliburton was going to run it. It turns out they dramatically inflated the number of soldiers walking through the door so they could make more money on the center, ripping off the taxpayers. It turns out that the supplies they were given for our troops, Halliburton ended up consuming for their own employees, having Super Bowl parties, using the food and drink that had been prepared for our troops.

One of the witnesses yesterday said there was a certain arrogance of the Halliburton contractors when it came to our troops. They were annoyed when the soldiers asked for certain things. It was all about profit. It was all about them.

Why in the world hasn't a single committee in the Senate called Halliburton in to answer for these things? Because Halliburton has friends in high places. People don't ask these rude and embarrassing questions of this powerful special interest corporation.

I thank Senator DORGAN and the Democratic Policy Conference for continuing to bring in the whistleblowers. One would think there would be a Member of the Republican Senate embarrassed enough at Halliburton's conduct in this war in Iraq that they would join us in a bipartisan effort. Sadly, this do-nothing Republican Congress has been a coverup Republican Congress as well. They don't want to talk about it. They don't want to raise the questions.

Do you think the feature in the Washington Post this last Sunday would have invoked at least some response from the Republican chairmen of major committees in the Senate? It was an exposé. It showed that when we created this provisional authority in Iraq to create a civil society, it turned out to be a patronage operation, worse than Brown and FEMA when it came to Katrina.

What they did was screen employees who were headed over to Iraq to spend billions of dollars and ask them probing questions about their qualifications. And do you know what the questions were. Here are some of the questions: How did you vote in the last primary? Did you vote for President Bush? What is your position on the issue of abortion? Where do you stand in terms of the Republican Party of America?

These were the questions asked of people we sent over to manage billions of dollars, our taxpayers' dollars, and rebuild Iraq. Is it any wonder we are in the fourth year in a war with no end? Is it any wonder that Iraq today is still in shambles from the viewpoint of its civil government? Is it any wonder when one looks at this gross incompetence, the same type of incompetence, patronage, and favoritism we saw, sadly, with Hurricane Katrina when Americans were disadvantaged?

There was a time in the history of this great institution when no President could get by with what this administration is getting by with. There was a time when a Democratic Senate would challenge a Democratic President, when a man named Harry Truman would stand up and say: We are going to look at profiteering and waste in waging the war against the Nazis and those who are their allies, even if we have a Democratic President, even if it might embarrass him.

Sadly, those days are gone. This Congress stands mute. This Congress refuses to ask the hard questions of this administration. This Congress refuses to acknowledge the obvious. We have lost 2,686 American soldiers in Iraq, and over 20,000 have returned home seriously injured. We have spent over $325 billion. The scandalous conduct of contractors over there, deserving of investigation, has been made a matter of public record because of Senator DORGAN's hearings, and this administration and this Republican Congress refuse to ask the hard questions. Clearly, it is time for a change.

It is a time for new leadership that will ask these hard questions on behalf of our soldiers and our taxpayers.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Five minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Illinois. I appreciate him attending the hearing yesterday. As he indicated, we would prefer not to do oversight hearings. That is a job for

other committees. But because they have not done it, we have a responsibility to do them, and will.

We have done 10 oversight hearings with respect to contracting in Iraq. I am convinced the stories we have heard at these hearings undermine our American soldiers, undermine our troops, and cheat our taxpayers. I don't, for the life of me, understand why there is not aggressive activity in this Chamber and at the Pentagon to root out the waste, fraud, and abuse we have seen. It is almost as if there is a sleepwalk going on through these issues.

I have held hearings, and we have described all of the issues. Yesterday, a woman who worked for Halliburton went to Halliburton and said: What is happening is Halliburton is billing, in some cases, five times the amount they should be billing to the Federal Government for certain activities in Iraq.

For complaining to her superiors about the taxpayers being cheated by this contractor, she was put under guard by four civilians working for Halliburton, kept overnight, put on an airplane, fired, and shipped out of Iraq. That is what she got for being a whistleblower to talk about how the taxpayers were being cheated.

I am going to speak more about those issues this week with respect to all the hearings I have held. It is not for the purpose of injuring anybody. It is for the purpose of protecting our troops and our taxpayers.

Briefly, I want to describe something I am going to send over to the inspector general of the Defense Department today. This is a letter that was given to us yesterday at the hearing. It is a letter from Halliburton—Kellogg, Brown and Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton. It is from Mr. Standard, a civilian contract employee who was a truckdriver in Iraq who was wounded.

By the way, Halliburton hires these contract civilian employees through their subsidiary in the Cayman Islands. Why do they have a subsidiary in the Cayman Islands? That is a tax haven country. They get American contracts from our Government and run them through the Cayman Islands so they don't have to pay taxes.

This is from Mr. Standard, a truckdriver wounded in Iraq driving a convoy as a civilian contract employee for Halliburton. Here is what Halliburton has written to this truckdriver:

> I hope this finds you well and enjoying a swift recovery. Per our conversation today, I included the medical records release form. This form authorizes me to share your medical records with the Pentagon Review Board for the purpose of awarding you the Secretary's Defense of Freedom Medal.

Halliburton is saying to the truckdriver: We would like you to sign a release so that we, Halliburton, can send information on your medical situation to the Defense Department and get you a Defense medal for the Defense of Freedom.

Here is what they said to this wounded truckdriver, an employee of their subsidiary Kellogg Brown and Root: Authorization and release reform, use and disclosure of protected information. It is a lengthy form. The truckdriver who signed this said: I am going to allow you to turn my medical records over to the Defense Department. And then under section 9, it says:

> Release: I agree that in consideration for the application for a Defense of Freedom Medal on my behalf that on behalf of myself, my hires, executors, administrators, assigns, and successors, I hereby release, acquit and discharge and do hereby release, acquit and discharge KBR, all KBR employees, the military, and any of their representatives, collectively and individually, with respect to any claims and any and all causes of action of any kind or character, known or unknown, that I may have against any of them.

What they have said to the employee in a deceitful way, in my judgment, is: We would like you to sign a medical release form so we can apply for a Defense Medal of Freedom for you. First, there is no such thing as being able to apply for a Defense Medal of Freedom. You are either entitled to it or you are not.

In any event, they are saying to the truckdriver, buried in No. 9, in exchange for that, you should assign away all your rights against this company or any actions of the company or any employee of the company.

This is unbelievably deceptive. Here is a company, Halliburton, saying to a truckdriver that was wounded, an employee of theirs—by the way, the testimony yesterday by other truckdrivers who were wounded in action is that Halliburton knew they sent a convey right into hostile action on a road that was marked red and black, which meant no travel by a civilian convey. They deliberately sent them onto that road anyway. Seven people were killed in that circumstance.

Aside from all of that—and that is important in itself—this company has written to its former employee, a wounded truckdriver, saying: We would like to send your medical records to the Pentagon, and we would like to get for you this Defense of Freedom Medal. So would you please sign this—not pointing out to him that he is signing away all of his rights to take action against that company or anybody in that company.

I have the standards of the Defense Medal of Freedom right here. Let me show the date. It is in 2001:

> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced today the creation of the Defense of Freedom Medal to honor civilian employees of the Department of Defense injured or killed in the line of duty. It will be the civilian equivalent of the military's Purple Heart. The first recipients to be honored will be the Defense Department civilians injured or killed recently as a result of the terrorist attack on the Pentagon. At the discretion of the Secretary of Defense, the medal may be awarded to nondefense employees, such as contractors, based on their involvement in Department of Defense activities.

This is unbelievably deceptive, and I believe deceitful, to try to persuade a former employee of this company to sign a release form saying it is a release of medical records when, in fact, it is a release of much more.

I am going to ask the inspector general to investigate exactly what this contractor has done.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority controls 15 minutes. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

ACTIONS OF THIS CONGRESS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I want to talk today a little bit about the progress we are making relative to securing our borders in the United States as a result of efforts made by this Congress and the administration. Before I do, I want to comment briefly on the presentation of the Senator from Illinois relative to the actions of this Congress and its passage of legislation or its investigative activity.

It is truly disingenuous when the assistant leader of the Democratic side comes to the floor and says we have done nothing as a Congress when almost every major piece of legislation that has been brought to the floor of this Senate has been filibustered by the other side of the aisle. Bill after bill after bill has been stymied, stopped and, in fact—it is no secret—there is an open understanding around here that the purpose of the Democratic leadership has been to make it virtually impossible to pass legislation in the Senate in order that the Senate appear to be an ineffective body—their feeling being that if they can obstruct enough things, they can make an argument that Congress isn't functioning and they should be put in charge.

It is an ironic position, of course, and has been on a number of times characterized as being similar to the situation when a man who shot both his parents, when brought before the court, asked for mercy because he declared himself an orphan. The fact is that the Democratic leadership of this body has decided to actively obstruct and try to stop almost any legislation of any significance that has come to the floor and, as a result, many things have been stopped because, as we all know, this is a body which functions essentially on a 60-vote majority, not a 51-vote majority. So, therefore, even though the Republican Party has 55 votes, we cannot pass something if there is united opposition. It has happened again and again.

I do find it a bit disingenuous to make this argument—it is their right to make it—but I think an honest reflection of what is actually happening around here makes the argument rather superficial and inadequate in its essence and its purpose.

SECURING OUR BORDERS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wish to talk about the progress we have made relative to securing our borders because this is one of those situations where the facts on the ground have not yet caught up with the public perception, which is understandable. That happens a lot in all sorts of areas where things are moving in the right direction, which were broken but are being repaired; there is still a perception that things are fundamentally broken. We are moving in the right direction relative to the borders.

Since 2005, we have made rather significant strides toward putting in place the infrastructure and the people necessary to secure the borders. I have the good fortune to chair the Subcommittee on Homeland Security. It may well be the only major appropriations bill that gets out of this Congress before we adjourn in October. That bill and the precursors to it, including the appropriations bills which we passed over the last 2 years and the supplementals that have gone with those bills, have allowed us to significantly expand our commitment to homeland security.

This has been an aggressive step taken by the Republican Congress and the administration. Back in 2005 we took a look at the problem when I assumed the leadership of this subcommittee, and we basically reoriented this whole funding stream within the Homeland Security Department, relative to the issue of weapons of mass destruction and border security. We concluded that those were the two major threats on which we as a committee should focus. So we took significant amounts of funds at that time and moved them into those accounts. Initially, back in 2005, the administration wasn't too excited about that, but after they took a hard look at what we were doing, they felt it was a good idea and they decided to join us in our efforts.

Now, since 2005, that effort has accelerated and has gained strength and has actually made significant gains. By the time this next bill passes, which I hope will pass before we leave at the end of September, it is expected we will have put in place almost 4,000 new border agents, which is a 40-percent increase in border agents—people physically on the ground; we will have put in place almost 10,000 new detention beds so that when we catch people, we don't have to release them. That was really an inappropriate policy that was being followed, which was when somebody was caught coming across the border, they were simply either taken back across the border if they were Mexicans, or they were released and told to come back and appear for a court date if they were not Mexican. And what we found was that nobody came back for those court dates. So with the 10,000 additional beds we put in place, that policy of catch and release will be curtailed.

We have added hundreds of miles of new fence, and we will continue to add new fencing where it is appropriate. We have dramatically increased the Customs and Border Patrol agents so that we are now up to 18,000 Customs officers, I am talking about—not Border Patrol—Customs officers who monitor our ports of entry, in addition to our Border Patrol individuals. We have greatly increased the commitment to the Coast Guard, which is the first line of defense relative to our ports and also plays a major role, of course, along the access points of our coastline for people who are coming into the country illegally. We have added $7.5 billion to the Coast Guard accounts which are going to give them the new capability they need for the boats and the aircraft, specifically upgrading their aircraft, upgrading their helicopters. All of this is in order to give the Coast Guard the ability to intercept people who may be coming here to do us harm.

We dramatically increased our commitment in the area of nuclear detection. We set up the Nuclear Deterrence Office, which basically is a focused effort on the question of how to deter a nuclear attack and also respond to it should it ever occur—God forbid it should ever happen. That is obviously the intention of some of our enemies. They want to accomplish that. We need to be focused on trying to stop that from happening. We have dramatically expanded the intelligence capability of the Department of Homeland Security Analysis Center by adding over a half a billion dollars for that. These are increases that are making a difference in our capacity as a country to know who is coming into the country, what is coming into the country, and whether the people who are coming into the country represent a threat or whether they are just people who are coming to pursue appropriate lawful activity in the area of commerce or just in the area of visiting us or taking advantage of our educational system.

These are major steps forward. All problems haven't been solved yet, and we all understand that. But if we continue on this path toward significantly upgrading our capabilities in the area of our feet on the ground, our boots on the ground, and technology supporting those boots—and later this week there is going to be the release of the accounting for the security program for the entire border, which will be a major step forward. It will mean we will be able to start construction of major technology improvements along the borders to use our advantages in technology to be able to police our borders. Then, in addition, recognizing that should somebody actually breach our borders with some weapon that might harm us, we will have the capacity to try to mitigate the effects of that through better technology and the research that surrounds that effort.

We have basically made a huge commitment in this area, dramatically increasing our funding, dramatically increasing our personnel, and dramatically increasing our technological capability. It is very likely that within the next year—in fact, it is probable, not likely—the results of this are going to become very clear to the American people. But as with many things—the perception that the border remains an open sieve, which it was and it shouldn't have been, but it was, especially along the southern border; and the perception that we don't have in place the technology to protect ourselves, which we didn't; the perception that we had not adequately upgraded the Coast Guard to do its job, which we hadn't—all remain the perception in the marketplace, and understandably so.

But the facts on the ground are that we are significantly upgrading our capabilities along the borders; that we have significantly upgraded our technological capability and we are continuing to expand that dramatically; that we are significantly improving the capacity of the Coast Guard, and that systems such as US–VISIT, which basically tracks who is coming into the country through a fingerprint process, are up and running and appear to be giving us significant results.

So I think we should talk about the good that is happening and our efforts to do the right thing along the borders, which is secure them and the progress that we are making. We should recognize that although we are not there yet, we are clearly on a path toward accomplishing our goal, which is to make sure that the people who come into this country, first, come in legally and, secondly, when they come in they do us no harm and their purpose is to do us no harm; and thirdly, that the product that is coming into this country is for the purpose of commerce, not for the purpose of harming us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority controls 4 minutes 15 seconds in morning business. The minority's time has expired in morning business.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 12 minutes as in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the Chair.

HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE IN DARFUR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is disheartening to be back on the floor of the Senate again to talk about the looming humanitarian catastrophe in the Darfur region of Sudan. Despite the partial peace agreement signed in May between the Sudanese Government and one rebel faction, the 3-year civil war

in Darfur has intensified in recent months. By any account, the situation is rapidly deteriorating.

Today, Darfur faces a more complex and brutal environment where rebel groups have splintered, and one has joined forces with the Sudanese Army, strengthening jingaweit militias that have long used rape, murder and mayhem to gain control of the region.

On August 28, Sudanese Government forces launched a major offensive in Darfur to finish off any opposing rebels, in direct violation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and cease-fire accord. As a result, tens of thousands more civilians have been forcibly displaced, bringing the total to more than 2 million people. And, of course, for those who have been displaced, disease and dysentery are rampant, causing the death rate to increase.

Relief organizations that have not already left the region face near impossible hurdles to reach hundreds of thousands of desperate people in need of food, water, and medical attention who are also vulnerable to the intensifying and indiscriminate aerial bombings. It is a scene straight out of Hell.

The well-intentioned, 7,000-member African Union peacekeeping force is understaffed, under-equipped, and has been unable to stop the violence in Darfur. The fact is they don't even have the communications, airlift, mobility, or support that most military would have. Estimates of the number of people who have died from war and disease in Darfur range as high as 450,000. That is 75 percent of the population of my own State of Vermont.

The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1706 that would replace the African Union force with a much larger U.N. force empowered to protect civilians. The Sudanese Government not only rejected the resolution but demanded that the African Union withdraw from the country after its mandate expires at the end of this month.

While the United Nations, the African Union, and most of the international community are united in support of a larger U.N. peacekeeping force, the government in Khartoum has repeatedly refused. I think they probably fear that the U.N. can pose a challenge to its own ability to act with impunity and its own ability to carry out murder and mass extinction of people.

It is ludicrous that a lone despot, Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, can obstruct the deployment of a U.N. peacekeeping force to stop genocide from continuing in his country. He has even gone so far as to threaten to attack any U.N. force that enters Sudan. This is a man who has made it very clear he supports the genocide and will try to stop anybody who wants to bring a halt to it.

Despite the Bush administration's diplomatic efforts in pressing for urgent international intervention to ease the Darfur crisis, China and Russia managed to thwart passage of a stronger U.N. Security Council resolution. And on August 20, the Arab League Committee on Sudan backed the Sudanese President's refusal of a U.N. peacekeeping force. They further distanced themselves from any responsibility for the situation in Darfur. It is amazing. People are dying. People are being killed. They are being raped. They are being murdered. They are being starved and they are dying of all kinds of diseases. Nobody takes responsibility. All the forces that can do something about it—Russia, China, the Arab League, Sudan itself, that could stop this—wash their hands of it.

The diplomatic inertia on Darfur is illustrative of just how much America's credibility and influence has eroded in the eyes of the world, largely because of our misguided policy in Iraq. We can't threaten anybody. We can't cajole anybody. We have lost our credibility. We have squandered the trust and confidence of our allies, particularly those in the Arab world, and now the administration's leverage with which to solve other regional and global crises has weakened. Darfur is one example. The impasse over Iran's nuclear program is another.

It is tragic how much damage this administration's policies have caused to America's leadership on so many issues that require the cooperation and support of other nations. The price in Darfur is an emboldened Sudanese regime that has managed to defy U.S. diplomatic pressure and the deaths of thousands of innocent people. Urgent and immediate action is essential to save Darfur from further catastrophe.

First, the President will today finally appoint a Presidential Special Envoy to Sudan. Many of us here, myself included, called for the designation of a Special Envoy for Sudan for months, so this long overdue decision is welcome.

Secondly, although the African Union troops are too few and lightly equipped to stop the violence, they are serving as witnesses for the rest of the world at a time when the government in Khartoum commits atrocities and makes it more difficult for humanitarian organizations and journalists to operate.

The United States and other nations must continue to support the African Union until a U.N. peacekeeping force is deployed, knowing that could take 4 to 6 months.

There should be no doubt that our first priority is to get U.N. peacekeepers on the ground as soon as possible. But in the interim, if African Union troops are forced to leave at the end of September, the last line of protection will be lost and an even worse period of lawlessness and slaughter will begin.

Third, the administration should call upon the European Union and United Nations Security Council to impose financial, travel, and diplomatic sanctions against the Sudanese leadership, rebel forces, and others responsible for the atrocities in Darfur.

Fourth, we must increase diplomatic pressure on countries friendly to Khartoum—particularly Russia, China, members of the Arab League—to use their influence to convince Sudan to support a United Nations peacekeeping force. If they don't, Russia, China, and members of the Arab League also have to bear complicity for genocide. Unfortunately, these are the same countries where our own influence has weakened dramatically over the past 5 years.

Fifth, the administration should urge all United Nations member states to accelerate implementation of Security Council Resolution 1706 for the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers to Darfur. The White House should be working vigorously to persuade other countries to commit troops and funds for the U.N. force.

Finally, in circumstances such as these, the United Nations should be empowered to deploy troops to prevent the mass murder of civilians, irrespective of stubborn, self-serving opposition of the government of the country.

When a country's corrupt, abusive leader, lacking any legitimate mandate from the people, flagrantly violates U.N. resolutions and a cease-fire agreement and embarks on a scorched Earth campaign which threatens the lives of countless innocent people, the U.N. should be able to go in.

If Darfur was not in Africa but it was in Europe, we would have responded differently. Although belated, our response, as the leader of NATO, to the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia put a quick end to that ethnic cleansing.

Darfur is on a different continent, but the forcefulness of our response to genocide should not depend on where genocide occurs or the race or ethnicity or nationality of the victims. Human beings are dying, irrespective of their color or their ethnicity or their nationality. The United States should stand up and do all we can to stop genocide.

I have no illusions about the difficulties of ending this conflict, nor do I question the sincerity of those who tried. But the efforts so far have been woefully inadequate. The situation calls for more intensive, sustained, high-level attention than our country and other countries have provided so far. It is genocide whether it is White people or Black people, whether it is Europeans or Africans. Genocide is genocide.

I yield the floor.

CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am going to speak about the Oman Free Trade Agreement, but I wanted to first respond to my colleague from New Hampshire who was on the floor of the Senate earlier this morning saying there is no problem with respect to what we are accomplishing here. He listed various accomplishments. He said: The only things we cannot accomplish are the things we are obstructed

from accomplishing because the minority will not let us.

First of all, that is not the case because, with respect to oversight hearings—which was the subject I raised and my colleague from Illinois raised this morning, oversight hearings—nobody is obstructing anybody from holding oversight hearings. That is the responsibility of the committees and the chairmen of the committees, to hold oversight hearings.

I have held some in the Democratic Policy Committee because the regular committees won't hold them, but let me describe a few of the things I have found in the hearings I have held—some big, some small, all of them, in my judgment, cheating American taxpayers: Contractors in Iraq paying $45 for a case of Coca-Cola; contractors in Iraq paying $7,500 for a 1-month lease on an SUV; contractors in Iraq who are buying towels for the troops, and instead of buying the hand towels for our troops to use that would cost a relatively small amount of money, they triple the amount that the taxpayers pay for these hand towels for our soldiers because they want the company name on them, Kellogg Brown and Root, embroidered on the towels. So they triple the cost of the towels.

Henry Bunting came and testified about that. He said he was the purchaser. They said: Purchase the towels with the embroidered name of our company on it. He said it costs more. They said: Don't bother about that; it doesn't matter. It is a cost-plus contract. The taxpayer pays for it.

The list of abuses is endless. At any point along the way did anybody say we ought to look into this, issue subpoenas? No, no; dead silence.

Twenty-five tons, 50,000 pounds, of nails are laying in the sands of Iraq because the contractor ordered the wrong size. What did they do? Dumped them out. It doesn't matter, the taxpayers are paying for all of that.

There were $85,000 new trucks left to be torched, put on fire on the side of the road because they had a flat tire and they did not have a tool to fix them. The contractor says: That is not a problem. The taxpayers will pay for that.

Serving food to the soldiers? The contractor that gets the contract to provide food for the soldiers is providing food that has out-of-date stamps on the food. It doesn't matter. Serve it to the soldiers anyway.

Yesterday, a woman came forward who worked in Iraq, as I mentioned earlier today, Mrs. McBride. She said they were charging the Government five times the amount of money, five times the billings of the number of soldiers who were using the recreational facilities. They were double counting and triple counting and, in some cases, submitting forms with five times the number of people. Why? To inflate the cost, to extract money from the American taxpayer.

All of this is going on and nobody seems to care. Oversight hearings? You show me where the oversight hearings have been held. Show me. They have not been held because nobody wants to embarrass anybody around here. We have one-party rule—in the White House, House, Senate. Nobody wants to embarrass anybody.

You have sole-source, no-bid contracts given at the Pentagon. The top civilian official, the top person in the Pentagon who rose to the top civilian level in the Pentagon as a contracting officer, who everyone said is one of the finest contracting officers in the Pentagon, do you know what she said? She said: The awarding of these sole-source, no-bid contracts to Halliburton is the most substantial abuse that I have seen in my service in the public arena.

What happened to her? Nobody cares.

Under the reconstruction program, I am told, we, the American taxpayers, spent $18 billion for reconstruction for Iraq. We ordered an air conditioner for a room in Iraq, and then it went to a contractor, a subcontractor, another subcontractor, and pretty soon the American taxpayer paid for air conditioners and that room now has a ceiling fan—yes, a ceiling fan. It is just unbelievable what is going on. Again, nobody seems to care.

I mentioned before that in the 1940s, Harry Truman was a Senator in this Chamber, and he put together the Truman Committee. It was bipartisan. They went after waste, fraud, and abuse. They wouldn't tolerate it. I am sure Franklin Delano Roosevelt was furious that a Congress was nipping at his heels, a Congress of his own party nipping at his heels on these issues. It didn't matter. Harry Truman, Republicans and Democrats together, went after it.

I proposed three or four times in the Senate to have votes to establish a select committee to do just that, but, sorry, no dice. Nobody wants anything to do with this issue.

I will come to the floor and give a list of what we have discovered in 10 hearings and see if anybody stands up to say: Yes, that makes sense; we support all that. None of this makes sense. It cries out, it begs for leadership. This undermines American soldiers and it cheats American taxpayers and it is unbelievable what is going on and nobody seems to care very much. So when I have the opportunity to hear someone say: We haven't held oversight hearings because we have been obstructed—nonsense. Or: We have held oversight hearings—nonsense again. Neither excuse washes. Nobody is minding the store. Nobody is watching the till.

The fact is, American taxpayers are taking a bath—and it is not just the taxpayers. It is water connected to the Euphrates River taking water to the military installations in Iraq. And, yes, the top American in the company, Halliburton, who is responsible for moving nonpotable water to the soldiers in the military installations in Iraq, is the American who wrote the report. I have seen the report. What he said was the nonpotable water that is provided to the soldiers for the purpose of showering and brushing their teeth and washing their hands and doing the kinds of things they do was more contaminated than raw water coming from the Euphrates River. And their internal report says: This was a near miss. This was a near miss. It could have caused death or mass sickness.

This event, which was a near miss, could have caused death or massive illness, it has been denied that it even happened by the company. The Pentagon doesn't seem to be very interested. The company denies it happened, despite the fact that we have it in writing from the person who was in charge and who still works for the company. It is unbelievable.

I didn't come to talk about that, but when I hear people say there has been aggressive oversight, or any oversight in this Congress—it is a sham. It is not the case.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

UNITED STATES-OMAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5684, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5684) to implement the United States-Oman free trade agreement.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes divided as follows: Mr. DORGAN, 10 minutes; Mr. CONRAD, 10 minutes; the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee, 10 minutes, equally divided.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I believe I had reserved 1 hour of which I had used 30 minutes previously. The vote is at noon, so I intend to speak for the other 30 minutes, if that is appropriate?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me talk about the Oman Free Trade Agreement. There are nine additional free-trade agreements being negotiated right now, nine of them. This past week there was an announcement that the monthly trade deficit is now $68 billion a month; a $68 billion monthly trade deficit. If ever there was a definition of failure, this is it.

So here is what we have: We have the good old boys negotiating trade agreements—Republicans and Democrats. They happen to be Republicans now because they are in power, but it has gone on for some long while. Here is what you see: Trade deficits, which are

represented by a mountain of red ink—or a deep valley of red ink in the case of this chart—the highest trade deficit in history, an unbelievable trade deficit. No country has ever had these kinds of deficits. They will have significant consequences for our country.

These deficits must be paid for with a lower standard of living in our country. Every single day, we send $2 billion out to foreign countries because we import $2 billion more than we export. That means every single day we are selling $2 billion of this country. We are selling America piece by piece.

Does this give anybody pause? Is anybody concerned? No. You know what we need to do? Let's do another trade agreement. We have done trade agreements here, at this point on the chart, we have done them here, we have done them here, and every single incompetent trade agreement this country signs up for ends up dramatically increasing our Federal deficits. We are choking on them, pulling the rug out from under American workers, shipping more American jobs overseas. And what is the response of this Congress? You know, let's do more of it. Why? Because we live in a global economy, and this is free trade.

I once knew, in my little home, a three-legged blind dog with fleas that they used to call Lucky. Labels didn't mean much to me—didn't mean much to that dog either, as a matter of fact. ''Free trade,'' that is the label on this nonsense. It is not free and it certainly is not fair.

This country has become Uncle Sucker on trade agreements. We have signed up to almost anything. Most of our trade is foreign policy and soft-headed foreign policy at that. I am in favor of trade. I want to expand trade—the more the better, but I demand it be fair to this country. When it is not fair, I think we ought to insist. It doesn't matter to me whether it is Oman or China or Europe or Japan or Korea or Mexico or Canada, I think we ought to say it is a new day. And the way we are going to trade with you is with circumstances that are fair to our country, to our workers, and to our country's interests.

Trade ought to be mutually beneficial. When we sign up to trade with somebody, it ought to be mutually beneficial.

Let me tell you what is coming next year. Next year everyone in this country will have an opportunity to start buying Chinese cars because China has announced that they intend to start shipping Chinese automobiles to the U.S. marketplace. We have a trade agreement with China about cars. Let me describe what it is.

It says: China, when you ship a car to the United States—it will happen starting next year—we are going to hit you with a 2.5-percent tariff, a tiny little tariff, a 2.5-percent tariff you are going to have to pay on the cars you ship into our marketplace. And, by the way, any American cars that we send to China next year, we agree we will pay a 25-percent tariff.

So a country with whom we have a $2.5 billion trade deficit, we signed up, on bilateral automobile trade, that they should be able to charge a tariff 10 times higher on automobiles when we try to sell a car in their country. That is unbelievably incompetent. That is what our country has agreed to.

That is just one little piece. Most people wouldn't know about dealing with bilateral automobile trade. It affects American jobs. It pulls the rug out from under our workers. That is just one. There are dozens and dozens of similar examples.

Since I am speaking about automobiles, let me describe the situation with Korea. South Korea sent us over 700,000 cars last year. I will show you the chart. South Korea sent 730,000 cars last year into our marketplace. Do you know how many American cars we sold in South Korea? We sold them just 4,251 cars. Is it because they don't want American cars? No. It's because the Koreans largely closed their market to our product even as we opened our markets with theirs. Do we do anything about it? No. We sit around twiddling our thumbs—sucking our thumbs in some cases—and lament that this is going on. It is an unbelievable failure.

Ninety-nine percent of the cars driven on the streets of South Korea are Korean-made cars. Why is that the case? That is exactly the way they want it, and that is the way it will stay because our country doesn't seem to care. We sign up to all of these trade agreements. In fact, we are doing a new agreement with Korea now. That is one of the nine. Does anyone really care about fair trade?

So in this context, let me talk about Oman now.

There are about 400 organizations, ranging from the League of Rural Voters to the National Farmers Union to the Sierra Club to the AFL–CIO, about 400 organizations have come out in opposition to this trade agreement. What is the reason for that? Let me describe it with a letter which many of them signed which says the following:

> Like NAFTA and CAFTA, OFTA [the Oman Free Trade Agreement]—fails to include any meaningful labor and environmental protections. The lack of effective labor provisions in OFTA is particularly significant in light of the recent revelations of massive labor abuses in Jordan—a Nation with which the United States has a free trade agreement. These violations involve widespread human trafficking, 20-hour workdays and widespread failure to pay back wages. More troubling is the fact the Oman FTA contains weaker labor provisions than the Jordan FTA.

Let me describe what is going on in Jordan. This is actually a New York Times piece. I have actually spoken to the people who went to Jordan and saw these sweatshops.

> Propelled by a free trade agreement with the United States, apparel manufacturing is booming in Jordan, its exports to America soaring twenty-fold in the last 5 years.
>
> But some foreign workers in Jordanian factories that produce garments for Target, Wal-Mart and other American retailers are complaining of dismal working conditions—20-hour days, of not being paid for months, and of being hit by supervisors and jailed when they complained.

Here is what happens in Jordan. They fly in so-called guest workers from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, put them in a corner of Jordan in sweatshops, in factories with closed doors, and then they fly in Chinese textiles, and in sweatshop conditions, with imported workers from Bangladesh and imported textiles from China, they produce products which they ship to the United States.

Let me describe some of the conditions. Some of these workers imported from Bangladesh were promised $120 a month but in some cases were hardly paid at all. One worker was paid $50 for 5 months of work. Forty-hour shifts were common. Let me say that again. Forty-hour shifts—not weeks—were common. Forty-hour shifts in those sweatshops apparently replaced the 40-hour workweek. There were frequent beatings of any workers who complained.

What is the relevance of all this to an Oman Free Trade Agreement? First of all, the country of Oman has about 3 million people. Of that rather small population, over one-half million are actually foreign guest workers. The majority of Oman workers involved in manufacturing and construction are not from Oman. The majority of the workers in Oman are foreigners brought in from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and other very poor Asian countries, under labor contracts to work in construction and in factories.

Here is what our own country's State Department's 2004 Report on Human Rights said about Oman. We are doing a trade agreement now with Oman. Our own State Department reports that:

> The law prohibits forced or compulsory labor, including children; however, there were reports that such practices occurred. The government did not investigate or enforce the law effectively. Foreign workers at times were placed in situations amounting to forced labor.

Our own State Department talks about forced labor in Oman. It doesn't matter to the people who put this agreement together. They could care less. They do not intend to put in strong labor provisions with respect to this trade agreement.

There are no labor unions in Oman that would be protective of workers or negotiate for workers. In 2003, the Sultan of Oman issued a Sultanic decree which categorically denies workers the right to organize and join unions of their choosing. In some circumstances, workers in Oman can join ''representative committees,'' but those committees, just as is the case in China—China is now advertising a lot of unions—those committees are not independent of the employers or of the Government. China now has unions that

are part of the Communist government, and the Sultanic decree that prohibits unions in Oman allows representatives of workers to get together but not independent of employers or the Government.

By the way, the Sultan of Oman has written to our U.S. Trade Ambassador and promised that he will improve Oman's labor laws in October of this year. That would be next month. How do you calculate that? That would be after the U.S. Congress votes, wouldn't it? They are going to improve their labor laws after we have voted. Yes, I guess I have heard that before. Maybe this country ought to be suggesting that some of these things be improved before they negotiate free-trade agreements.

Under fast-track rules, the Congress, in its own lack of wisdom, said: We would like to put ourselves in a straightjacket. We can negotiate agreements and treaties on nuclear arms without fast track, but on trade agreements, we must negotiate in a way that says when we come back to the Congress, we are prohibited from offering amendments. So the Congress actually votes to put itself into a straightjacket and prohibit any amendments. I don't vote for that. I lead the fight against it because I think it is fundamentally undemocratic. But the Congress has already done that. That is why there will be no amendments to the Oman Free Trade Agreement.

Let me describe one other provision in the Oman agreement, and it has been in a couple of other agreements as well.

Earlier this year, there was a big fight in this country about Dubai Ports World, which is a company owned by the United Arab Emirates, taking over major seaports in this country—six major U.S. seaports—New York, New Jersey, Baltimore, New Orleans, and Miami—taken over to be managed by a company owned by the United Arab Emirates. There was a huge blowup as a result of that, a massive firestorm of protest. The President had already approved it, said: It is fine; don't worry about it; we think American ports can be managed by the United Arab Emirates or the company it owns, Dubai Ports World. I didn't think so, but the President said it is fine.

Brushing aside suggestions from Republicans and Democrats alike, President Bush endorsed the taking over of shipping operations at six major seaports by a state-owned business in the United Arab Emirates. He pledged to veto any bill Congress might approve to block that amendment. But still, in all, there was such a storm of protest by the American people saying: With all of the terrorist threats, maybe we ought to manage our own seaports; there was such a storm of protest that Dubai Ports World announced they had reached an agreement and they decided they would sell or negotiate to sell their interests in managing our ports.

Michael Chertoff, Homeland Security Secretary, said during that period that the proposed takeover of terminal operations at five U.S. ports by a Dubai company would give U.S. law enforcement a better handle on security at U.S. terminal operations. Let me talk about terminally bad judgment here. Here is the guy in charge of Homeland Security who says that allowing foreign interests to take over the management of America's ports will fully actually provide better security for our country. You talk about unbelievably bad judgment. Everybody has a right to be wrong, including the head of Homeland Security. Let's just hope that when he is wrong, it doesn't result in another terrorist attack on this country.

Here is what is in the Oman Free Trade Agreement, a provision that says that the U.S. government cannot block Oman's acquisition of the following activities:

> Landside aspects of port activities, including operation and maintenance of docks, loading and unloading of vessels directly to or from land, marine, cargo handling operations and maintenance at piers.

That is the managing of a port. That provision says that we can't block Oman from acquiring or an Oman company from acquiring—that is in the trade agreement. This agreement says we will not be able to block, without abrogating this trade agreement, a company from Oman from operating America's seaports. This alone should defeat this trade agreement. It will not because there are 60 or 65 Members of this body who will vote for any trade agreement, almost. This provision alone should defeat this trade agreement.

Let me finish by talking about the consequences of this senseless trade policy on jobs in this country. I know it is tiresome to some of my colleagues to keep hearing about this, but I believe it is worthy to describe where we are headed in textiles, manufacturing, high tech, and other areas.

You will remember the television commercials advertising Fruit of the Loom underwear. It ran a lot of commercials talking about how wonderful Fruit of the Loom underwear would be for each of us. They paid someone to dress as green grapes and someone to dress as red grapes. I guess that is the little logo on Fruit of the Loom underwear. They danced, the green and red grapes danced and sang and played music and various things. I don't know who would actually accept money to dance as grapes, but they found actors to dance as grapes, and they danced right out of this country. They don't make one pair of Fruit of the Loom underwear in this country anymore, not one.

If you want Mexican food, go to the grocery store and buy Fig Newton cookies. They left this country. They went to Monterrey, Mexico.

Every Member of this Senate, I will bet, once had a Radio Flyer, a little red wagon. It was made in America for 110 years. You can still buy them here, but they are not made here anymore; they left for China—all made in China, the little red wagon, the Radio Flyer.

If you wear Tony Lama cowboy boots, you might be wearing Chinese shoes. I have told this story until everyone is tired of it. Americans used to make them, but they lost their jobs. When they were fired, the last job they had was to take the ''American made'' decals off existing inventory. They had an hourly job plus benefits. The jobs left our country and went to China.

They still sell these Huffy bicycles in this country, but they are made for 33 cents an hour by people working 7 or 8 days a week, 14 hours a day. The last thing those American workers did on their last day of work and leaving the parking lot was to leave a pair of empty shoes in the parking lot. They left a pair of empty shoes in their parking space. It was a way for workers to say to the company: You can ship our jobs to China, but you are not going to fill our shoes.

It goes on and on and on—yes, with product after product, textiles and manufacturing, high tech. One-half of the Fortune 500 are now doing software development offshore, overseas. It is pretty unbelievable.

In all of this, we give a tax cut, tax break. We not only manage bad trade agreements to make it easy to ship jobs overseas, we say: If you do that, we will give you a big fat tax cut. Four times I have tried to eliminate that in the Senate, and four times the Chamber of Commerce and others who support that tax cut rounded up enough votes in the Senate to preserve it. I find that appalling. Nonetheless, that is what is happening with trade.

Ultimately, this country will not long remain a world economic power if it does not retain a world-class manufacturing base. This country will not continue to expand the middle-class workers if it continues to incentivize the shipment of jobs overseas. The construct of many big companies of saying: We want to produce where it is cheap—China, Indonesia, Bangladesh; we want to sell in the established marketplace of Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, Fargo, Pittsburgh, and run the income through the Cayman Islands to avoid paying taxes—will undermine the economic interests of this country.

This country made great progress by expanding the middle class with good jobs that paid well. We debate a lot of things in this Senate, but there is nothing we debate with respect to a social program that is more important than a good job that pays well. We would do well to remember that as we take a look at bad trade agreements and prepare ourselves, once again, as the majority of this Chamber—but not me—votes yes in favor of trade agreements which pull the rug out from under workers, pull the rug out from under farmers, and undermine the long-term economic interests of this country.

We have the same chorus of a tired song that is being sung today in the

Senate about the virtues of another bad trade agreement. This one was with a very small country of 3 million people. I have never been to Oman. I don't know much about Oman. I am not opposed to the country of Oman in any way. I am interested in standing up for the economic interests of this country. This is one more chapter in a book of failures on international trade. This country, this Senate, has a responsibility, finally, to start getting it right.

I will vote against the trade agreement with Oman and hope that, even as this trade agreement will likely pass, as other trade agreements have, an agreement that undermines our country's economic interests, in the next nine trade agreements, all of which are being negotiated now, we will finally see some negotiations that stand up for our interests.

It is long past the time, when we have a $68 billion-a-month deficit and nearly $800 billion-a-year trade deficit, it is long past the time to ask the questions: What is wrong? How do we make it right? What is not working? How do we fix it?

This Congress, this administration, seems content, as has been the case now for the last dozen years, in snoring through all of this, saying it will be handled by someone else, sometime later, pretending somehow the consequences do not matter.

The consequences do matter. There are significant consequences.

One can make a case when the Budget is debated here that whatever the budget deficit is, it is money we owe to ourselves. One can make that case. Economists make that case. It is not a case I make, but it is money we owe to ourselves. We cannot make that case with a trade deficit. That is money we owe to others. Over one-half of our trade deficit is now held by the Japanese and the Chinese, which is used to buy American property, American stocks, bonds, to buy part of this country—drip, drip, drip, every day, $2 billion a day.

I will vote against this trade agreement and hope the next trade agreement that comes to the Senate will be an agreement that fixes previous problems rather than negotiates new agreements. The problems in the previous agreements are legend: NAFTA, CAFTA, United States-Canada. It is absolutely legend, the problems that exist, and not one of them has been fixed. All of them continue to exist. We turn a blind eye to all them as we negotiate new agreements. That disserves this country's economic interests.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, two-and-a-half months ago, the Senate passed the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act. We did so because we expected that this agreement will benefit our economy. That is still true. And we should pass it again today.

Under the agreement, virtually all American merchandise exports will enter Oman duty free. Oman will eliminate most of its duties right away. And Oman will liberalize the remainder of its duties within 10 years. This agreement gives free access to the growing Omani market to American industrial equipment, medical devices, frozen beef, and snack foods.

Oman has also agreed to go beyond its multilateral commitments to provide greater American access to its services markets. It has committed to protect intellectual property. It has committed to combat corruption and bribery. And it has implemented reforms of its labor laws to address American concerns.

I support this trade agreement on its merits. It is a good agreement. And it will strengthen our ties with a valuable partner in the Middle East. I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

Some may wonder why a small agreement like this has generated any controversy. In part, that is due to the process by which this agreement came before Congress.

The Finance Committee unanimously adopted an amendment to the Oman implementing legislation. Then the administration rejected that amendment outright. This disregard for the constitutional authority of Congress over international trade only weakens support for the administration's trade policy.

But more broadly, the controversy over Oman reflects more general frustration with trade agreements. In Congress, there is deep frustration with the way that the administration has negotiated these agreements. And there is frustration with the way that the administration has handled important issues like labor and the environment.

Americans are concerned about job losses. Americans associate globalization with threats to their jobs. And Americans are concerned that trade agreements might erode conditions in the workplace.

These issues will come to the fore as we approach the expiration of Trade Promotion Authority in the middle of next year. In the wake of the controversy surrounding Oman and other trade agreements, it is high time that we take a hard look at American trade policy. It is high time that we ask ourselves how we can make it work better.

For starters, we have to refocus our trade policy. We have to make sure that it helps American workers and businesses meet the competitive challenges that they face in the global marketplace. We have to rethink the types of trade initiatives that we pursue in the future. We have to build grassroots support for trade. And we have to pay far greater attention to domestic initiatives to increase our savings, reduce our trade deficit, improve education, and help the workers whom trade leaves behind.

I look forward to that debate. I look forward to laying the foundation for a broader consensus on trade. And I look forward to the day when we can once again join together on the trade agreements of the future.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I oppose this deeply flawed trade agreement. When the Senate passed its version of this legislation a few months ago, I noted that one group had said that this trade agreement is as bad as CAFTA, except where it is worse.

The Oman trade agreement is the latest in a series of agreements that have been based on the failed NAFTA-CAFTA model of trade that has shipped thousands of businesses and millions of jobs overseas, devastating communities across our country. The record of that model of trade is crystal clear. During the post-NAFTA era, our trade deficit has exploded from $98 billion in 1994 to $805 billion in 2005. And yet, once again we are debating more of the same.

As I noted in June, the Oman Free Trade Agreement is stamped from the NAFTA-CAFTA cookie cutter. It provides no real enforcement for the labor or environmental provisions. And even the most modest efforts to address the deficiencies of the NAFTA-CAFTA model were rejected by the White House. Most notably, an attempt by the Senate Finance Committee to deny trade benefits for products made with slave labor, approved unanimously by the Committee on an 18-to-0 vote, was rejected by the administration, which submitted this agreement without that reasonable protection.

You don't have to be a trade expert to know that our trade policy is alarmingly bad. When even the most reasonable addition is proposed by the Finance Committee to deny preferential benefits for products made by slaves, the administration refuses to include it.

Mr. President, any consultative role Congress was to have as part of the fast-track process has been shown to be meaningless. I very much hope my colleagues will remember this when we consider legislation to renew fast-track implementing authority. Until then, we should reject this and similarly flawed trade agreements.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to use my 10 minutes that has been allocated to me on the Oman Free Trade Agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act. The United

States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will benefit U.S. farmers, workers, and businesses. It will lead to economic growth and enhance the predictability of the rule of law in Oman, a reliable ally of the United States in the Middle East.

The United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will also serve as a model for other free-trade agreements in the Middle East.

In this way, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will contribute to the formation of a Middle East free trade area, a development that would provide major economic and political benefits for the United States.

Let me begin by discussing the economic gains that this agreement will bring to the United States. On the day that the agreement goes into effect, Oman will no longer impose any tariffs on U.S.-produced consumer and industrial products. The agreement will also benefit U.S. farmers as some 87 percent Oman's tariff lines will go to zero for U.S. agricultural products on day one of the agreement. Oman's remaining tariffs on U.S. farm products will be phased out over 10 years.

In addition, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will result in substantial improvements in market access for U.S. service providers and new protections for U.S. investors.

Given the benefits that it will provide to the United States, the agreement has been endorsed by groups as varied as the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Chemistry Council, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, the National Foreign Trade Council, and the United States-Middle East Free Trade Coalition, an entity consisting of over 110 U.S. companies and associations supporting trade expansion in the Middle East.

The United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will result in new market opportunities for farmers, workers, and businesses throughout the United States, including those in Iowa.

For example, the Midamar Corporation—a small business located in Cedar Rapids, IA, that specializes in halal foods—anticipates that the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will lead to new sales of Iowa-produced foods in Oman. Profit margins in the food sector are very low, and Oman's current average applied tariff of 5 percent on many of Midamar's products cuts into the company's profits.

With Oman's tariffs on many of Midamar's products going to zero on day one of the agreement, Midamar will have significantly improved access to the Omani market immediately upon implementation of the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement.

At least two other Iowa businesses expect to benefit from the free-trade agreement. The HNI Corporation of Muscatine is the second largest manufacturer of office furniture in North America, and HNI is specifically targeting the fast-growing market of the Middle East. HNI anticipates that the agreement will provide improved opportunities for it to sell its products in Oman.

Likewise, Lennox—which manufactures residential heating and cooling products in Marshalltown—predicts that it will gain from the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement. Thus, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement could have a direct impact on Iowans in Cedar Rapids, Muscatine, and Marshalltown. This agreement will benefit people in other States as well.

I am confident that the Oman Free Trade Agreement will ultimately lead to new market access opportunities for American products in yet more Middle Eastern countries. President Bush is advocating the development of a United States-Middle East free trade area by 2013, and the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement is another building block toward the accomplishment of this goal.

The United States has already implemented free-trade agreements with four other countries in the Middle East—Bahrain, Israel, Jordan, and Morocco.

A completed United States-Middle East free trade area would result in significantly improved market access for U.S. farm, consumer, and industrial products in a region of the world populated by 350 million people that is growing quickly.

Such an arrangement would also benefit people throughout the Arab world by providing needed economic reforms. So a United States-Middle East free trade area is in the best interests of the people of the Middle East, and it would advance American interests as well.

In addition to providing new economic opportunities for the United States, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will contribute to the security of our country. Oman is a consistent ally of the United States in an unstable part of the world. Given that the United States is currently engaged militarily in two countries in the region, now is a particularly appropriate time for us to further cement our close ties with Oman.

By improving economic conditions in Oman, I am convinced that the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement will contribute to the stability of that country. Such stability will help solidify Oman's position as a moderate Arab country and a friend of the United States.

The United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement is a strong agreement. It will provide economic benefits for the United States. It will also benefit Oman, a consistent ally of the United States.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the question is on the third reading of the bill.

The bill was read the third time.

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) would each vote ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Leg.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Enzi	Murray
Allard	Frist	Nelson (FL)
Allen	Graham	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Grassley	Obama
Bennett	Gregg	Pryor
Bond	Hagel	Roberts
Brownback	Hatch	Salazar
Bunning	Hutchison	Santorum
Burns	Inhofe	Sessions
Cantwell	Isakson	Shelby
Chafee	Jeffords	Smith
Chambliss	Kerry	Specter
Clinton	Kyl	Stevens
Cochran	Landrieu	Sununu
Cornyn	Lieberman	Talent
Craig	Lott	Thomas
Crapo	Lugar	Thune
DeMint	Martinez	Vitter
DeWine	McCain	Voinovich
Domenici	McConnell	Warner
Ensign	Murkowski	

NAYS—32

Biden	Dole	Lincoln
Bingaman	Dorgan	Mikulski
Boxer	Durbin	Reed
Burr	Feingold	Reid
Byrd	Feinstein	Rockefeller
Carper	Inouye	Sarbanes
Coburn	Johnson	Schumer
Collins	Kohl	Snowe
Conrad	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Dayton	Leahy	Wyden
Dodd	Levin	

NOT VOTING—6

Akaka	Coleman	Kennedy
Bayh	Harkin	Menendez

The bill (H.R. 5684) was passed.

CHANGE OF VOTE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, on rollcall No. 250, I voted ''yea''; it was my intention to vote ''nay''. I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to change my vote since it will not change the outcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. VOINOVICH).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ALICE S. FISHER TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Alice S. Fisher, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of a person from my hometown of Louisville, KY, Alice S. Fisher, who has been nominated to be Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice.

As I remarked at her confirmation hearing last year, Ms. Fisher is a battle-tested veteran of the war on terror. For the last year, she has again been on the front lines of that struggle.

She has, really, an outstanding and impressive record. She first joined the Justice Department in July of 2001 as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division. She was placed in charge of its counterterrorism efforts. Just 2 months later came September 11.

After that horrific day, our Government responded forcefully and quickly. Ms. Fisher's role was absolutely vital to that fight. She was responsible for coordinating all matters related to September 11 investigations and prosecutions. In addition, she headed up the implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act.

As a Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Ms. Fisher also headed up the Department's efforts to combat corporate fraud just when the collapse of Enron and other corporate scandals were front-page news. She also helped draft the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and worked closely with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In July of 2003, Ms. Fisher left the Department to become a partner at Latham and Watkins, where she concentrated on litigation and white-collar crime.

Last spring, Alice Fisher again answered the call to join her country by rejoining the front lines on the war against terror when the President nominated her to head the Criminal Division.

As I mentioned earlier, the Criminal Division has many important responsibilities, among them national security prosecutions, both counterterrorism and counterintelligence, combatting gang violence and organized crime, prosecuting corporate fraud and identity theft, going after public corruption and protecting kids from child pornography.

For the last year Ms. Fisher has impressively led the Department in all facets of its operations while serving as a recess appointment. In this capacity, she has further demonstrated her expertise, determination and integrity. Alice Fisher is a proven leader.

Under her tenure, the counterterrorism section has convicted numerous terrorists, including Zacarias Moussaoui, the 20th September 11 hijacker. She created a new gang squad of experienced prosecutors to combat national and international gangs such as MS–13. She supervised the Enron task force resulting in the convictions of top executives Ken Lay and Jeffrey Skilling. She heads the Katrina Fraud Task Force which combats all fraud and corruption resulting from this national disaster. As of the end of July, the task force has charged 371 defendants. Under her leadership the Public Integrity Section has prosecuted major public corruption cases.

In addition, since the beginning of her tenure, the Department has aggressively prosecuted crimes against children. It is now coordinating 18 national child pornography operations.

Ms. Fisher was born and raised in my hometown of Louisville, KY, and is part of a close-knit family. Her father ran a chemical plant. Her mother worked the night shift as a nurse. She still has a lot of family back home in Louisville.

She earned her B.A. degree from Vanderbilt University and her law degree from Catholic University. Her husband, Clint, also serves our Nation as the Director of Aviation Policy for TSA. Last, but certainly not least, she is the mother of two boys, Matthew, age nine, and Luke, age five.

In a relatively short time, Alice Fisher has accomplished a great deal. She served her country after the September 11 attacks. She rose to become a partner in one of America's most prestigious law firms, and she then chose to forego a more lucrative career in private practice to come back in and serve her country again.

Alice Fisher knows that every day she works on behalf of her country she is working to build a stronger and safer America for her two children and for all of ours. Thanks to her, America is a safer place than it was on September 11, 2001.

A man who held the job for which Ms. Fisher has been nominated is her old boss, Michael Chertoff, a pretty good lawyer in his own right. Alice earned praise when he called her ''one of the best lawyers I've seen in my entire career.''

America needs Alice Fisher to be confirmed as the next Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division. I look forward to her confirmation. She is a wonderful person, an accomplished lawyer, and a Kentuckian of whom all America can be proud.

She has support from a number of groups I will make reference to, including the support of the Fraternal Order of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association and the National District Attorneys Association. I ask unanimous consent those letters of endorsement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, August 17, 2006.

Hon. ARLEN SPECTER,
Chairman Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SPECTER AND SENATOR LEAHY: I want to most strongly support the nomination of Alice Fisher as the Assistant Deputy Attorney General of the United States in charge of the Criminal Division and urge her speedy confirmation.

Ms. Fisher served her country well as the Deputy Assistant General in the Criminal Division during a unique and tragic time in this nation's history. During the period following September 11, 2001, Ms. Fisher was responsible for managing the Counter-Terrorism Section and worked on the development of policy issues on criminal law enforcement and national security.

Since her appointment as Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division she has been responsible for the Department of Justice's response to Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath of widespread fraud; the development of a strategic plan to address the burgeoning identity theft problem that confronts this nation; child sexual exploitation issues; corporate fraud; and public corruption issues.

Prior to Ms. Fisher's career in the Department of Justice she also served Congress in her capacity as Deputy Special Counsel to the United States Senate Special Committee to investigate the Whitewater Development and Related Matters.

Given Ms. Fisher's experience in both the legislative and executive branches of government and her exhibited level of commitment to the Department of Justice I can think of no one who would bring more ability to this position than she would.

If you have any questions or concerns in regard to my support of Ms. Fisher please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. CHARRON,
Executive Director.

GRAND LODGE, FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, August 1, 2006.

Hon. ARLEN SPECTER,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Committee to the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN AND SENATOR LEAHY: I am writing on behalf of the membership of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for Alice S. Fisher to be continued as the next Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice.

For more than one year, Ms. Fisher has served as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division as a recess appointment. She has diligently served in this role and has coordinated with law enforcement on a variety of issues, including antiterrorism prosecutions, public corruption cases, and child sex exploitation cases. Prior to this, Ms. Fisher served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice and was responsible for managing both the Counterterrorism and Fraud Sections at the Department. During her tenure, she was responsible for coordinating the Department's national counterterrorism activities, including all matters relating to September 11th investigations and prosecutions, terrorist financing investigations, and the implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act.

Her management of the Fraud Section included supervising many investigations into corporate fraud, particularly in the areas of securities, accounting, and health care. She worked on a variety of policy matters relating to identity theft and testified before the Senate Special Committee on Aging about the impact of these crimes on our nation's senior citizens.

Currently Ms. Fisher's management of the Innocence Lost Initiative, a cooperative effort to prevent and prosecute child prostitution between the FBI, the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, has led to 188 open investigations, 547 arrests, 79 complaints, 105 indictments, and 80 convictions in both the Federal and State systems.

Ms. Fisher's experience as a litigator and policy-maker, as well as her strong, positive relationship with the law enforcement community, makes her an excellent choice to lead the Criminal Division. The F.O.P. has no doubt that she will continue to be an outstanding Assistant Attorney General, and we urge the Judiciary Committee to expeditiously approve her nomination. If I can provide any further recommendations for Ms. Fisher, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Lewisberry, PA, August 31, 2006.

Hon. HARRY REID,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: On behalf of the 25,000 members of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), I am writing to you in support of the nomination of Alice S. Fisher for the position of Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. Since her nomination easily cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee in May, we are now appealing to you in your leadership role as the Senate Minority Leader to intervene and help bring this important matter to the floor of the Senate for a full vote.

It our understanding that this process has stalled due to the unfortunate invocation of partisan politics. As the largest non partisan professional federal law enforcement association, FLEOA would like to see Ms. Fisher's nomination evaluated based on its merit. To that end, the membership of FLEOA is convinced that Ms. Fisher's impressive credentials would result in her being confirmed should the matter reach the floor of the Senate.

Why is this matter important to the membership of FLEOA? Several of our members have had the distinct pleasure of working with Ms. Fisher, or have served on one of the many task forces she oversees. Two notable examples are the Katrina Fraud Task Force and the President's Identity Theft Task Force. When you ask one our members about their experience working with Ms. Fisher, the typical response is an enthusiastic thumbs-up. Ms. Fisher has earned the reputation as a tireless proponent of federal law enforcement, and she commands the respect of our membership.

In her capacity as the Deputy Attorney General, Ms. Fisher did an outstanding job leading the Enron Task Force. Again, several FLEOA members who were involved in the Enron investigation have nothing but the highest praise for Ms. Fisher. A logical person that objectively reviews Ms. Fisher's long resume of distinguished accomplishments can only reach one conclusion: her confirmation as the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division will significantly strengthen the law enforcement component of our nation.

While the threat of domestic terrorist attacks continues to escalate, time does not take pause to accommodate indecision. If we sit back and allow Ms. Fisher's recess appointment to expire, then we become complicit in weakening the Department of Justice. This is unacceptable to the membership of FLEOA.

We have reached a pivotal point in our government's history where it has become increasingly difficult to recruit and retain the best and the brightest minds to assume leadership positions. If we don't make every effort to confirm the nomination of Ms. Fisher, then who do we expect to get to fill these important positions? More importantly, who will the Attorney General have to turn to for assistance in initiating and overseeing numerous federal law enforcement task forces?

Senator Reid, the membership of FLEOA hopes that you will consider the nomination of Ms. Fisher a priority matter. We are prepared to provide you with additional recommendations and anecdotal support if necessary. Please don't hesitate to contact me or Executive Vice President Jon Adler if we can be of further assistance. On behalf of the FLEOA membership, I thank you for your leadership and your service to our great country.

Sincerely,

ART GORDON,
National President.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the pending question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending question is the nomination of Alice Fisher. The Senator from Vermont has 30 minutes.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I will use part of that time.

Today we are considering the nomination of Alice Fisher for the position of Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. We have less than 2 weeks left in the legislative session before we recess for the elections. The Republican leadership has once again delayed doing the work of the American people so they can consider a nominee about whom many questions remain.

We are being required to consider this nomination despite unanswered questions regarding her role in the administration's controversial, questionable detainee treatment policies. Of course, on these questions, as on so many other matters involving torture and detainees at Guantanamo, the administration has refused to provide Congress with the information it has sought.

As I said 2 weeks ago when the President re-nominated five extremely controversial choices for lifetime positions on the Nation's highest courts, I continue to be disappointed in the misguided priorities of the Bush-Cheney administration and, in fact, the rubberstamp Senate Republican leadership. I really think all Americans—Republicans and Democrats—would be better served if we used the few remaining weeks of this legislative session to address vital, unfinished business, such as the war in Iraq. That might be something the American people would really like to see us debate, the war in Iraq. We haven't had a real debate on it since we saw that huge sign a few years ago behind the President that said: ''Mission Accomplished.'' He was dressed up like Tom Cruise in ''Top Gun'' and put up the sign that said: ''Mission Accomplished.'' I guess they decided it was all over; why debate it?

It would be nice if we enacted a Federal budget. The law says—the law says, and I say this to my law-and-order friends who control the agenda, my Republican friends who control the agenda—the law says we have to have a budget passed by April. We didn't do it in April or May or June or July or August, now September. We are all law and order around here, but apparently we think we don't have to follow the law.

Of course, we are supposed to pass the 11 remaining required appropriations bills by the end of this month. It doesn't look like that is going to happen.

We talked about enacting lobbying reform and ethics legislation. I remember the Republican leadership having a wonderful press conference, just absolutely wonderful—just touched by it—especially knowing they would never bring up the legislation.

It would be nice to address the skyrocketing cost of fuel. I don't think any one of us goes home where we don't hear about the cost of gas, but we don't do anything about that.

People talk to me about health care. We don't do anything about that, either.

How about a bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform bill? I stood outside the White House and praised President Bush for his support of a comprehensive immigration reform bill. He told several of us in a long meeting—and I think he was passionate about it—that we needed to have one. When a 30-vehicle caravan of Vice President CHENEY's with sirens wailing came up to the Hill today, I don't think they were saying: Let's pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill.

But what we can do is controversial nominations—not the items the law requires us to do but the things the fundraising letters require.

In this case, we have an interesting nominee to be the head of the Criminal Division for the Justice Department. She has never prosecuted a case. She has minimal trial experience. But she is going to be the head of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department. Her career has been spent almost entirely in private practice.

She is a longtime protegee of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, who was in overall charge of cleaning up after Katrina, which I know will happen some day. So after being his protegee, she is rewarded with the post of heading the Criminal Division of the Justice Department.

I did not block her from coming out of the Judiciary Committee. We had a voice vote on June 16 of last year. But then concerns arose about her role, while Mr. Chertoff's deputy, in meetings in which controversial interrogation techniques used on detainees at the Naval Facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, were discussed and decided upon with the Department of Defense. There remain questions about whether Ms. Fisher attended those meetings and her role in determining how these detainees would be questioned and treated. What did she know? When did she know it? What did she do about it? They are simple questions: What did she know? When did she know it? And what did she do about it? None of that has been answered.

This administration has yet to come clean to the Congress or to the American people in connection with the secret legal justifications it has generated and practices it employs. They can't dismiss these outrageous practices at Guantanamo as the actions of a few ''bad apples''. With the Senate adoption of the antitorture amendment last year, the recent adoption of the Army Field Manual, and 5 years of the Bush-Cheney administration's resistance to the rule of law and resistance to the U.S. military abiding by its Geneva obligations, that may be finally coming to a close. Of course, we can't even be sure of that, given that despite the great fanfare surrounding the law against torture, we had a Presidential Signing Statement that undermined enactment of the antitorture law and basically said the President and those he designates can work outside the law.

Now, I remain troubled by the nominee's lack of prosecutorial trial experience. There have been people who have held this position—Mr. Chertoff, James Robinson, William Weld—who were seasoned Federal prosecutors. In her case, she would be supervising people who have to prosecute and make judgment calls on very complex cases. They would have to decide whether to go forward. She will be the one to finally sign off on that, but she has never prosecuted a case. It is sort of like saying you are going to be the head brain surgeon; however, you have never really been in an operating room, you have never seen a brain, but there you go.

Even more troubling, perhaps, is the fact that there are so few senior officials at the Justice Department who do have experience in criminal prosecution. I agree with the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator SPECTER, who has noted: The lack of criminal experience at the top of the Department ''does concern me.'' He said that while there were lots of ''first-class professionals'' throughout the ranks of prosecutors, ''there are tough judgment calls that have to be made at the top, and it's good to have some experience on what criminal intent means when you have to make those decisions.''

Both Senator SPECTER and I are former prosecutors. We understand that.

I also share the concern of the distinguished senior Senator from Michigan, Senator LEVIN, with the uncertainty about Ms. Fisher's role as Mr. Chertoff's deputy in the development and use of controversial detainee interrogation techniques. Despite repeated requests from Senator LEVIN, who is, after all, the ranking member and a past chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, joined by others, the Justice Department refused to satisfy Senators on these points. As a result, concerns remain whether Ms. Fisher had knowledge of the abuse of detainees at Guantanamo and what, if any, action she took. The rubberstamp Republican leadership of this Congress has gone along with the administration and said: You can't have the information.

Sometimes holding this stuff back creates far more of a problem than just telling the truth out front. If FBI Director Mueller had been more forthcoming with me at, or after, the May 2004 hearing in which I asked him what the FBI had observed at Guantanamo, we could have gotten to a detention and interrogation policy befitting the United States years sooner than we have. But rather than answer a simple, clear question, it is easier to stonewall.

If the administration had been forthcoming with Congress in October of 2001 when it decided secretly to flout the FISA law and conduct warrantless wiretaps of Americans, we could have avoided 5 years of lawbreaking, and we could have had a more effective surveillance program targeted at terrorists, not Americans.

In other words, every time they cover up, things get worse. Just tell the truth, be open, and things get better. If the administration had answered me when I asked over and over about the Convention Against Torture and about rendition, we could have come to grips with those matters before they degenerated, as they have, into what has become an international embarrassment for the United States. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell, a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, now acknowledges it threatens our moral authority on the war on terrorism. Again, if the administration had honestly answered years ago, we could have cleared it up, and we wouldn't be in a case where the rest of the world looks at us now and asks us what we are doing.

Just today, a Canadian commission, having studied it, reports that a Canadian citizen, Maher Arar, who was returning from vacation—a Canadian citizen, a Canadian citizen—was arrested by American authorities at JFK Airport in New York. He was held for 12 days, not allowed to speak to a lawyer or a Canadian consular official, and he was then turned over not to Canada, which was 200 miles away, but to Syria where he was tortured, thousands of miles away.

So here is what the United States is faced with. We seized a person from another country in New York, we don't allow him to speak to a lawyer, and we don't allow him to speak with his consular official from his own embassy. We don't send him back to his country, where if he is wanted for something they could arrest him—it is, after all, about a 5-hour drive to the Canadian border—instead we ship him thousands of miles away to be tortured in a Syrian prison, incidentally done without the knowledge of the Canadians.

Now, I know how Senator LEVIN must feel because all of my efforts to get to the bottom of this case have also been brushed aside by the Bush-Cheney administration. Over the years, I have yet to get a satisfactory explanation. The Canadian commission, though, found he had no ties to terrorists. He was arrested on bad intelligence, and his forced confessions in Syria reflected torture, not the truth. We know if you torture somebody long enough, they will say anything you want.

The United States should acknowledge what it did, but instead, it uses legal maneuvers to thwart every effort to get to the facts and be accountable for its mistakes. No matter how egregious the mistake, no matter how many international laws are broken, nobody ever admits a mistake around here.

Now, I certainly understand, if somebody votes against this nomination, it may be a vote not so much against Ms. Fisher, but a vote against this administration's stonewalling and going it alone to the detriment of the interest of the United States and the safety, security, and rights of all Americans.

Last month, our Nation commemorated the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and the devastation it wrought. We haven't done much to clean it up at Homeland Security, but it is the one-year anniversary. Last week, our Nation commemorated the fifth anniversary of the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil in our Nation's history. These twin tragedies—one caused by nature, one caused by terrorists—serve as somber, but ever present, reminders that our Nation is still not secure. One year after this administration's appalling foot-dragging, incompetent, and wasteful response to Hurricane Katrina, our Nation still has citizens on the Gulf Coast who do not have homes to return to or jobs waiting when they get there. Five years after 9/11, our country still lacks an effective international strategy to protect the American people from terrorism. We need to refocus our efforts and our resources where they belong: on providing real security for the American people. America can do better. The full agenda before us as we enter the final weeks of this legislative session reflects how, even though one party controls the White House, the House of Representatives, and the Senate—even though we have a one-party Government—these Republicans have failed, at our Nation's most pressing hour, to provide this country with leadership.

Mr. President, I see the distinguished Senator from Texas on the Senate floor. I reserve the remainder of my time, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak in favor of the confirmation of Alice Fisher, the President's nominee to be Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice. I am glad to say that Ms. Fisher's confirmation will finally overcome the unnecessary obstruction that she faces in this Congress which has forced the President to reassess her appointment.

Ms. Fisher is an outstanding nominee for this position. In addition to her credentials, she has substantial previous public service experience, particularly in the Criminal Division during a difficult time following the terrorist attacks of September 11. That experience will serve her well as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division.

The Criminal Division is one of the most important jobs of the Department of Justice. It handles a variety of issues, including counterterrorism, violent crime, corporate fraud, and crimes against children. The Criminal Division's importance to the success of America's fight in the war against terror makes it all the more important that the Senate end this obstruction and make Ms. Fisher's appointment permanent.

Beginning with her service as Deputy Special Counsel to the U.S. Senate's Special Committee to Investigate Whitewater, Ms. Fisher has exemplified the attributes needed to lead an organization with a mission vital and important, obviously, to the Department of Justice's Criminal Division. Prior to her latest Government service, she was a litigation partner for 5 years at the DC office of Latham & Watkins, one of the premier law firms in the country. She takes from that experience a respect and deep knowledge of the law.

Since her recess appointment in November of 2005, necessitated because of holds on her nomination, Ms. Fisher has served as Assistant Attorney General with distinction, honor, and success. She immediately refocused the division's mission in a way that reflects the priorities of the administration. For example, under Ms. Fisher, the Criminal Division has made impressive headway in supporting the Nation's national security mission, in combating violent crime, including gang violence, and protecting our children from exploitation on the Internet and elsewhere.

What is troubling about the debate today on this nomination is that we are having a debate about a nominee who so clearly deserves confirmation. What is troubling about today's debate is that it is reflective of the continued obstruction of nominees by Democrats in the U.S. Senate. This obstruction has not only affected judicial nominations, which is perhaps better known, but also the confirmation of important executive branch nominees with significant national security responsibilities. Ms. Fisher oversees vital counterterrorism and counterespionage divisions. But because her nomination has been blocked, these critical components have operated without a Senate-confirmed supervisor for more than a year.

Consider the constant refrain from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle that this Republican-led Congress is not doing everything it can to protect America's national security. Beyond Ms. Fisher's nomination, this message stands in stark contrast with the democrats' record of obstruction on other key national security posts.

Perhaps the most inexcusable obstruction pertains to the nomination of Kenneth Wainstein, who would head the newly created National Security Division. Mr. Wainstein's confirmation would fulfill one of the key recommendations of the WMD Commission, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission. It was the WMD Commission that recommended the reorganization of intelligence-gathering components within the Department of Justice. Mr. Wainstein has broad-based, bipartisan support, yet he inexplicably still faces a Democrat filibuster-by-hold.

We cannot wait any longer for Democrats to release their hold on Mr. Wainstein. In the 5 years since the attacks of September 11, the Federal Government has taken a number of steps to reorganize and improve its resources to better fight terrorism. Our terrorist enemies are always changing and adapting, and so must we—if we are to keep the upper hand in the war on terror.

Some 15 months ago, the WMD Commission recognized that improvements should be made to the Department of Justice's national security apparatus. They recommended a reorganization of the Department and the creation of a new National Security Division—which would bring together under one umbrella all the national security components of the DOJ.

The National Security Division that Mr. Wainstein would oversee is critically important to the Department—and to America's national security. It will integrate the key national security components—the Counterterrorism and Counterespionage Sections of the Criminal Division and the Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, which has the lead role in implementing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA—under the leadership of a single Assistant Attorney General. Bringing together these mission-critical entities will enhance our ability to fulfill our top priority of preventing, disrupting and defeating terrorist acts before they occur.

The President approved the WMD Commission's recommendation more than a year ago. And Congress embraced the concept and fully authorized the National Security Division as part of the USA PATRIOT Act reauthorization. Congress has also approved a reprogramming request submitted by the DOJ and office space has been dedicated and renovated—but unfortunately, it remains vacant. It remains vacant because holds have been placed on the nomination and we have seen a filibuster-by-hold. The Department has done everything it can until this Senate confirms Mr. Wainstein. Obstruction from the other side of the aisle, Mr. President, is impeding efforts to improve national security. Long-term planning is being delayed and uncertainty is beginning to affect morale. The Department of Justice needs Mr. Wainstein on board, to provide leadership, vision and guidance. Again, like Ms. Fisher's stalled nomination, Democrat obstruction is impeding this effort to improve national security.

But Ms. Fisher and Mr. Wainstein are not the only nominees to face obstruction. Just looking back to a few others who were slotted to fill positions critical to our Nation's war on terror have likewise been filibustered. For instance, the current Deputy Secretary of Defense, Gordon England, was filibustered before the President was forced to recess-appoint him. He was eventually confirmed. Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Eric Edelman, was filibustered, recess-appointed, and finally confirmed; and Office of the Director of National Intelligence General Counsel, Ben Powell, likewise was filibustered, recess-appointed and finally confirmed.

This obstruction is not limited solely to nominations. Who can forget how proud Democrats were when they celebrated killing the reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act, one of the most important anti-terror tools for our frontline law enforcement and intelligence agents. Democrats also complain that we are not doing all we can to secure the safety of our citizens, and then promote hyperbole and hysteria about the Terrorist Surveillance Program, which is well within the President's authority during wartime, to conduct critical battlefield intelligence-gathering against foreign threats to America.

I think the American people see through this Democrat obstruction. But nominations to critical national security positions should not face partisan road blocks. I recently read a newspaper report on the nomination of Mr. Wainstein. It reported that the office was ready, the phone lines up and the computers humming, waiting on him to start. But, his nomination is being blocked on reasons unrelated to him. This obstruction must stop.

I am glad Ms. Fisher will be confirmed later today and I hope that the Senate will be able to move on to Mr. Wainstein's nomination quickly so that we do not leave critical national security offices unfilled.

In closing, I am pleased that President Bush has nominated Ms. Fisher to serve as Assistant Attorney General and I look forward to her continued service in that post. I ask my colleagues to support her nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THUNE). The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I listened to the Senator from Texas, but I do not want to debate the Wainstein nomination today because we have the Fisher nomination in front of us. I would just say one thing in response; that is, the delays in his confirmation vote are directly the result of the administration's obstruction of Senate requests for very relevant documents. Any delays can be placed right at the feet of the administration that has stonewalled requests for information. I hope the Senator from Texas and other Republicans would join in legitimate requests for relevant information. The documents that are being sought are directly related to Mr. Wainstein and his role in the FBI as General Counsel from mid-2002 to mid-2003 and when he was the Chief of Staff for the FBI Director from mid-2003 to 2004.

So the delays here are directly attributable to the obstruction and the stonewalling of the administration in response to legitimate requests for documents. These impediments to votes can be easily removed by simply having the committee chairman join in the request for these documents, but that has not been forthcoming.

Today the issue is Ms. Alice Fisher. It is another example where requests for documents and for information have been denied. These are legitimate requests which directly relate to Ms. Fisher and to whether she should be confirmed. I want to get into the history of this matter in some detail. I yield myself 45 minutes for that purpose.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today the issue of detainee abuse at Guantanamo Bay is very much on our minds and in the headlines as we debate how we will treat detainees in the future. In this context, the nomination of Ms. Alice Fisher for the position of Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice is not just a routine appointment. Alice Fisher was the deputy at the Criminal Division while the abuse at Guantanamo was occurring and while concerns about interrogation tactics were being raised within the Criminal Division at that same time. We are being asked to confirm Ms. Fisher today with unanswered relevant questions about any knowledge she may have had or actions she might have taken relative to those interrogation tactics.

I want to share with my colleagues longstanding unanswered questions regarding Ms. Fisher's nomination to this position. The constitutional duty of the Senate to provide its advice and consent to nominations is a solemn one. Instead of respecting this constitutional duty, the administration has consistently sought to thwart it by denying us relevant information.

The administration has put up barrier after barrier, hurdle after hurdle to efforts to get legitimate information that bears on Ms. Fisher's fitness to serve in this important position. Why the administration has stonewalled for so long instead of answering questions and providing information can only be speculated by me. Is it because it is part of an effort to prevent information about interrogation tactics from being provided to Congress, or does it relate directly to Alice Fisher? I don't know the answer, but the fact of the stonewalling is undeniable. It is part of a pattern of secrecy that this administration has engaged in in so many areas and so many ways.

The information I have sought relates to what Ms. Fisher knew about aggressive and abusive interrogation techniques in use at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during the time that Ms. Fisher served as deputy head of the Criminal Division in the Justice Department from July 2001 to July 2003. From publicly released FBI documents, we have learned that FBI personnel raised serious concerns about these DOD interrogation tactics at weekly meetings between FBI and Department of Justice Criminal Division officials. I have sought to find out what Ms. Fisher knew about these FBI concerns over aggressive DOD methods; what, if anything, was reported to Ms. Fisher; and what steps, if any, she took in response.

If Ms. Fisher knew of aggressive interrogation techniques at Guantanamo and did nothing about it, or she knew about them but has denied knowing, then I would be deeply troubled. The administration has repeatedly obstructed efforts to get this information, information which is, in my judgment, relevant to Ms. Fisher's suitability for the position to which she is nominated.

The administration has literally and figuratively covered up the Guantanamo abuses. This refusal by the administration to provide relevant information is part of a larger pattern by the executive branch of denying the Senate the information needed to carry out confirmation and oversight responsibilities. Over and over again, the administration seems to use every means at its disposal to deny documents or information to the Senate, or to withhold key portions of documents, or to limit access to information.

It threatens to erode the Senate's constitutional obligations and responsibilities and the constitutional balance between the executive and legislative branches of Government. Senate acquiescence in the administration's refusal to provide relevant information undermines the fundamental principle of Congress as a co-equal branch of Government.

The story of the administration's concealing information about Guantanamo abuses began during a previous confirmation, that of Judge Michael Chertoff in early 2005 to head the Department of Homeland Security. Judge Chertoff had been the head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, where Alice Fisher served as his deputy from July 2001 to July 2003. In preparing for the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee's hearing on Judge Chertoff's nomination, I became aware of a document bearing on what officials under Judge Chertoff's supervision knew, and therefore about what he might have known, about the mistreatment of detainees at Guantanamo. This document had been made public in response to a Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, request.

The document, dated May 10, 2004, consists of a series of e-mails by an FBI agent—unnamed—recounting the concerns that FBI Agents as law enforcement personnel down at Guantanamo, had during 2002 and 2003. He was recounting what the FBI Agents saw in

those critical years when Ms. Fisher was the Deputy Director for the Criminal Division. It spoke about DOD interrogation techniques which ''differed drastically'' from methods employed by the FBI. It recounted ''heated'' conversations of FBI personnel with DOD officials.

There were heated conversations between FBI personnel and DOD officials about aggressive interrogation techniques. This FBI agent said that the Department of Defense has their marching orders from the Secretary of Defense and that the two techniques again differed drastically.

E-mails during those years recounting these heated conversations between the FBI which was objecting to the techniques being used at Guantanamo and DOD officials who were engaged in those techniques confirmed the serious FBI concern about what they saw at Guantanamo. FBI agents expressed alarm about the military's interrogation plans, saying in an e-mail dated December 9, 2002: ''You won't believe it.'' Also in that e-mail dated December 9, 2002, they included an outline of the coercive techniques in the military's interviewing toolkit.

So you have the FBI on the one hand talking to their headquarters about coercive techniques being used against Guantanamo detainees, complaining about those details, and in one e-mail dated September 30, 2002, FBI agents were asked whether or not they could even work with the military interrogators. They were told that FBI agents had guidance to work with military interrogators ''as long as there was no 'torture' involved.''

Think about it. We read the headlines in today's newspapers of the techniques being used by the Department of Defense, the CIA and the Department of Justice. These are the headlines that we see in today's papers. These are the events from which those headlines flow. These are e-mails back in 2002 and 2003 referring to coercive techniques that the FBI objected to, talking about heated conversations that the FBI was having with the Department of Defense over those techniques. That is what today's story flows from.

Yet the FBI was finally told by their superiors that you can be present as long as no torture is involved.

FBI agents complained of DOD techniques in a number of settings, including to the generals at Guantanamo, to the DOD General Counsel here in Washington, and in video teleconferences with the Pentagon. According to FBI emails, a senior member of the Department of Justice Criminal Division was present at Guantanamo at the time of a ''heated'' video teleconference during late 2002. FBI officials were so concerned that their agents at Guantanamo received guidance during this period from headquarters ''to step out of the picture'' and ''stand clear'' when these aggressive interrogation techniques are being used. That is how deep this went.

This was all brought back to the Department of Justice when Alice Fisher was the deputy head of the Criminal Division. And if the Criminal Division people were deeply involved in these debates, was Ms. Fisher involved? What did she know about the aggressive tactics? What did she know about the objection of the FBI agent, which is part of the Department of Justice, to these techniques? That is what we have tried to find out over the last year and a half.

The May 2004 FBI document I mentioned describes how senior FBI officials communicated regularly with their Justice Department counterparts in the Criminal Division during the period in question, the period when Ms. Fisher was Deputy Director of Department's Criminal Division. In these meetings, the FBI's deep concerns about techniques employed by DOD personnel were discussed. Efforts to learn more began during Judge Chertoff's confirmation as head of the Department of Homeland Security. He had been head of the Criminal Division during the time of these events, from April of 2002 through March of 2003 that Alice Fisher was his deputy.

Let me read from the May 2004 document. This was the highly redacted version which was available at the time of the Senate's consideration of Judge Chertoff's nomination. The document reads in part as follows:

> In my weekly meetings with DOJ, we often discussed [redacted, blanked out] techniques and how they were not effective for producing intelligence that was reliable.

Then there is a series of blotted-out names of several individuals with the abbreviation SES after the names indicating the individuals were members of the Senior Executive Service. The document states that the named individuals ''all from the Department of Justice Criminal Division'' attended meetings with the FBI. Again, Alice Fisher was the Deputy Director of the Department of Justice Criminal Division at the time.

The document continues:

> We all agreed [blank, redacted, covered over] were going to be an issue in the military commission cases. I know [blank] brought this to the attention of [blank].

That was the document that we were given during the Chertoff nomination. Clearly, the redacted information—the deleted portions of this document—was relevant. It included the names of senior Criminal Division officials participating in those meetings with the FBI agents. The administration withheld this information during Judge Chertoff's confirmation hearing before the Homeland Security Committee of which I am a member.

On February 2, 2005 during his confirmation hearing, I asked Judge Chertoff about this document. In that hearing, Judge Chertoff could not say which Criminal Division officials were named in the document or even whether the weekly meetings referred to in the document occurred on his watch as head of the Criminal Division. He could not recall any discussion about DOD's interrogation techniques at Guantanamo ''other than simply the question of whether interrogations or questioning down there was effective or not.''

Judge Chertoff further testified that he ''had no knowledge'' of the use of any interrogation techniques other than those that he described as ''plain vanilla.''

We learned a few months after Judge Chertoff's confirmation that the interrogation techniques the military was using at Guantanamo were anything but ''plain vanilla.'' The Defense Department investigation by Generals Schmidt and Furlow into the FBI allegations of detainee mistreatment at Guantanamo during the period of 2002 to 2003 found that interrogators at Guantanamo could subject detainees to numerous aggressive interrogation techniques. These included nudity, sleep deprivation, isolation, temperature extremes, both hot and cold, loud music and strobe lights and ''gender coercion;'' that is, inappropriate touching by female interrogators.

The report found that the interrogation of one high-value detainee involved many of these techniques as well as forcing the detainee to wear a dog leash and perform dog tricks; also forcing him to wear women's underwear; strip searches; and 20-hour interrogations for 48 out of 54 days.

Here is what one of the persons in the Army helping to keep these detainees in custody wrote about her experiences. She wrote:

> On a couple of occasions, I entered interview rooms to find a detainee chained hand and foot in a fetal position to the floor with no food or water, or care. Most times, they would urinate and defecate on themselves. They had been left there for 18 to 48 hours or more. On one occasion the air conditioning had been turned down so far the temperature was so cold in the room that the barefooted detainee was shaking with cold. When I asked the MPs on duty what was going on, I was told the interrogators the day prior had ordered this treatment and the detainee was not to be moved. The detainee was almost unconscious on the floor with a pile of hair next to him. He had apparently been literally pulling out his own hair throughout the night.

''Plain vanilla'' is all that Judge Chertoff heard about. But members of his Division heard about those techniques, and we didn't know that during the Chertoff nomination because the information was denied to us.

Other FBI documents include a partially redacted letter dated July 14, 2004 from Thomas Harrington, Deputy Assistant Director of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division to Major General Donald Ryder, Commanding General of the Army's Criminal Investigation Command.

> Detailee highly aggressive, interrogation techniques at Guantanamo.

The subject line in the letter is ''suspected mistreatment of detainees.''

The letter describes alleged incidences of abuse witnessed by FBI

agents as early as the fall of 2002. These include allegations of a female interrogator squeezing a male detainee's genitals, bending back his thumbs; an interrogator reportedly wrapping a detainee's head in duct tape; the use of a dog to intimidate a detainee.

The letter describes a detainee suffering from extreme mental trauma after being kept in isolation in a cell flooded with lights for 3 months.

The letter indicates these incidents and other FBI concerns were discussed with two officials in the DOD General Counsel's office in mid-2002.

There are two points to emphasize here. These events took place from 2002 to 2003 when Ms. Fisher was the Department's Director of the Criminal Division.

These events were reported to top level people in the Criminal Division.

The question is, What did she know about these events as Deputy Director of that Criminal Division? That is what we have tried to find out since her nomination. That is where we have been thwarted and frustrated and obstructed by the administration in getting information from them.

These are not some unknown people making these complaints to the Department of Justice's Criminal Division. This is our own FBI people who are strongly objecting to these aggressive DOD interrogation techniques. They were writing in. They were sending e-mails back to their headquarters about the military's coercive interrogations.

One e-mail said, ''You won't believe it''—the techniques used and what they were involved with. At the same time, FBI personnel had weekly meetings with senior Criminal division officials discussing the Department of Defense techniques. Again, Michael Chertoff was head of that division at the time Alice Fisher was his deputy.

Other Department of Defense investigations into detainee abuse, in particular the report of Major General George Fay and the Schlesinger panel, concluded that it was some of these aggressive techniques in use at Guantanamo which migrated to Afghanistan and Iraq and were part and parcel of detainee abuse at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere. If the techniques at Guantanamo that I have just described sound familiar, it is, because the pictures of those techniques used at Abu Ghraib became painfully familiar to us and to the world.

That Judge Chertoff did not recall any discussions about DOD interrogation techniques other than perhaps whether they were effective, never heard of a discussion about abuses, aggressive techniques being used by the Department of Defense, Judge Chertoff did not recall any knowledge, did not have any knowledge about who in his division might have engaged in such discussions or when those discussions might have taken place, should not have been the end of the Senate inquiry into this matter. If the Senate had access to the names listed in the May 2004 FBI document at the time of Judge Chertoff's confirmation, we would have tried to refresh Judge Chertoff's recollection about the conversations referred to in these documents.

The Senate clearly had a right to find out the names of these Department of Justice Criminal Division officials and ask them what they knew about these interrogations, what if anything they reported, what actions if any were taken. The Senate was frustrated and thwarted by an administration that wanted to cover up what was going on in the area of interrogation of detainees at Guantanamo.

In February of 2005, Senator LIEBERMAN and I wrote to FBI director Mueller requesting that he provide an unredacted version of the May 2004 document referring to the weekly FBI Criminal Division meetings or, if a copy was not provided, then provide a legal justification for denying us the unredacted document.

In letter dated 3 days later, February 7, 2005, the Department of Justice—not the FBI but the Department of Justice—wrote to deny the request. The Justice Department claimed that an unredacted copy could not be provided because it contained ''information covered by the Privacy Act . . . as well as deliberative process material.'' A few days later, on February 10, Senator LIEBERMAN and I wrote to the Attorney General requesting that he reconsider his decision not to provide an unredacted copy of the May 2004 FBI document.

Despite repeated requests, the Justice Department refused to provide either an unredacted copy of the May 10, 2004 e-mail or information on the names of the FBI and the Department of Justice personnel redacted from the document prior to the Senate confirmation vote on February 15, 2005 of Judge Chertoff, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Justice Department's refusal to provide this information based on the Privacy Act was a misuse of that statute. The Privacy Act was designed primarily to prevent the U.S. Government from disclosing personal information about private individuals who have not consented to that disclosure. That act is not intended to authorize the Government to conceal from Congress the names of public officials engaged in Government conduct funded with taxpayers dollars. Invoking the Privacy Act to deny the Senate relevant information regarding a nomination before the Senate was an abusive and dangerous precedent, and we were determined not to let it stand.

The excuses used to deny us an unredacted May 2004 document went beyond any assertion that a U.S. Senate has ever accepted from any administration as far as I can determine. There is no claim of executive privilege, and the document itself has no bearing on any advice given to the President. The particular FBI document that Senator LIEBERMAN and I sought, and the other documents that I have referred to, dramatize the refusal of the administration to be straight with the American people and with the Congress relative to the detainee abuse issue.

The thwarting of congressional oversight over this and so many other issues is deeply ingrained in this administration. The executive branch is determined to seize any crumb of justification to prevent Congress's access to executive branch documents needed to carry out our constitutional responsibilities of confirmation and oversight.

We found out a month after the Senate confirmed Judge Chertoff to head the Department of Homeland Security the redacted portions of the May 2004 FBI e-mail were, indeed, very relevant to Judge Chertoff's nomination. On March 18, 2005, the Justice Department finally responded to our February 10, 2005 letter, a letter from Senator LIEBERMAN and myself, asking the Department to reconsider its decision to withhold an unredacted copy of the May 2004 document. In its May 2005 response, the Justice Department stated it had reviewed the May 2004 FBI e-mail and provided a new version of the document, somewhat less redacted than previously.

While significant information continued to be withheld, including the name of the FBI agent who authored the e-mail, the new version contained new information, including the names of the four Department of Justice Criminal Division officials who had regularly met with FBI personnel concerned about Department of Defense interrogation techniques.

Specifically, the named Criminal Division officials who, according to this e-mail, were present at those meetings, discussing those interrogation techniques, were Alice Fisher, who served as Judge Chertoff's deputy, Dave Nahmias, then counsel to Judge Chertoff within the Criminal Division, and two other senior Criminal Division officials, Bruce Swartz and Laura Parsky. Also newly revealed was that one Criminal Division official, Bruce Swartz, had brought concerns about Department of Defense tactics to the attention of the Department of Defense Office of General Counsel.

On May 2, 2005, I wrote to Attorney General Gonzales requesting the name of the author of that May 2004 e-mail. Who was the FBI agent who wrote that e-mail naming those persons? I also requested an opportunity to interview both the FBI and the Department of Justice personnel named in that document, including, specifically, senior Justice Department officials David Nahmias, Bruce Swartz, and Laura Parsky.

I don't think there is any doubt that information would be relative to the

nomination of Judge Chertoff. The administration essentially told us, however, to trust them, that the information and interviews we were seeking were not relevant to Judge Chertoff's nomination.

Yes, it was.

This saga, the pattern of withholding relevant information about Guantanamo abuses continued in relation to Alice Fisher's nomination in April 2005 to fill the position vacated by Judge Chertoff, the head of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.

Remember, Ms. Fisher was specifically named by the FBI agent in the May 10, 2004 e-mail as having attended weekly FBI Department of Justice meetings where DOD interrogation techniques were discussed. The name of the agent, however, was still redacted. There was still, and is to this day, stonewalling and obstruction to legitimate requests of Senators who must vote under the Constitution on the confirmation of these appointees.

I ask unanimous consent to have a chronology of my attempts to get information relative to the Alice Fisher nomination printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHRONOLOGY RELATING TO THE NOMINATION OF ALICE FISHER FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, CRIMINAL DIVISION—AS OF SEPTEMBER 2006

Feb. 4, 2005: First Levin-Lieberman request (to FBI Director Robert Mueller) for an unredacted copy of the May 10, 2004 FBI e-mail referring to weekly DOJ–FBI meetings at which DoD interrogation techniques were discussed.

Feb. 7, 2005: DOJ response denies the Levin-Lieberman request for unredacted copy of May 10, 2004 FBI e-mail.

Feb 10, 2005: Second Levin-Lieberman request (to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales) for an unredacted copy of the e-mail.

Mar. 10, 2005: DOJ response provides a revised version of the May 10, 2004 FBI document with fewer redactions. New version includes a reference to Alice Fisher as one of the senior officials attending meetings where FBI agents expressed concerns about interrogation techniques at Guantanamo Bay.

April 4, 2005: Alice Fisher nominated for Assistant Attorney General of DOJ Criminal Division.

April 6, 2005: DOJ letter to Senator Levin supplementing the February 10, 2005 Levin/Lieberman letter, including third version of May 10, 2004 document with additional text restored. Name of e-mail's author remains redacted.

May 2, 2005: Levin letter to Attorney General Gonzales requesting again that DOJ provide the names of the author of the e-mail and other FBI personnel still redacted from the May 10, 2004 document and for an opportunity to interview FBI and DOJ personnel named in that document.

May 12, 2005: Judiciary Committee holds hearing on Fisher nomination.

May 2005: In response to written questions from Judiciary Committee member Senator Richard Durbin, Fisher states she did ''recall general discussions about interrogations at Guantanamo Bay'' but did ''not recall that interrogation techniques were discussed'' at weekly meetings between DOJ and FBI. She states she does ''recall being aware of FBI concerns about interviews'' but ''cannot recall the content of specific meetings about detainee interrogation at Guantanamo Bay.''

June 7, 2005: In response to second set of written questions from Senators Durbin and Kennedy, Fisher says she does ''not recall FBI personnel or anyone else expressing to me allegations about mistreatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.'' She states that she ''cannot reconcile my recollection with statements contained in the (May 10, 2004) e-mail. . . .''

June 14, 2005: Senators Durbin, Kennedy, and Levin interview Alice Fisher. Fisher says she does not recall FBI expressing concerns about interrogation techniques at Guantanamo Bay, other than concerns about their effectiveness.

June 16, 2005: Judiciary Committee reports Fisher nomination. Nomination placed on the Senate Executive Calendar.

June 29, 2005: Levin letter to Attorney General Gonzales asking for a reply to his May 2, 2005 letter and renewing requests for information and interviews of David Nahmias, Laura Parsky, Bruce Swartz, and other officials named in the May 10, 2004 e-mail.

July 26, 2005: DOJ Letter to Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter stating that the author of the May 10, 2004 FBI e-mail now says that he ''did not have conversations with Ms. Fisher nor does he recall conversations in Ms Fisher's presence about the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.''

July 29, 2005: Letter from Attorney General Gonzales to Minority Leader Harry Reid stating that the steps the Department has taken in response to Senators' concerns ''are sufficient for the Senate to make an informed decision'' about the Fisher nomination.

August 19, 2005: Levin letter to DOJ Inspector General Glenn Fine inquiring about issues to be reviewed by the on-going IG investigation into FBI allegations of detainee mistreatment by DOD personnel at Guantanamo Bay. Among issues Senator Levin recommends be reviewed is ''the extent to which Ms. Fisher was aware of FBI concerns about detainee interrogations and efforts to convey these concerns to DOD and others.''

August 31, 2005: Alice Fisher receives recess appointment from President Bush to become Assistant Attorney General of DOJ Criminal Division.

Sept. 16, 2005: DOJ IG Fine letter to Levin indicating that ongoing review of FBI personnel's allegations regarding detainee abuse at Guantanamo will include issues relating to ''the role of Alice Fisher, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, and other Department officials regarding detainee interrogation techniques.''

Sept. 19, 2005: Alice Fisher is re-nominated for Assistant Attorney General of DOJ Criminal Division.

Sept. 29, 2005: Minority Leader Reid letter to Attorney General Gonzales requesting that DOJ provide interested Senators with the opportunity to interview relevant FBI and DOJ personnel.

Dec. 15, 2005: At meeting with Attorney General Gonzales and White House Counsel Harriet Miers, Senator Levin requests meeting with FBI agent who authored the May 2004 e-mail without DOJ representative present, but offers compromise of having DOJ IG representative sit in on the meeting.

July 25, 2006: Senator Specter letter to Attorney General Gonzales requesting to set up an interview between Senator Levin and the FBI Agent.

July 25, 2006: Levin letter to Attorney General Gonzales requesting to meet with the FBI Agent with Senator Specter, and an IG representative present, or alternatively, a representative from the FBI's Office of General Counsel (OGC).

July 26, 2006: DOJ letter to Levin agreeing to the request to make FBI Agent available to be interviewed with a representative from the FBI OGC present, but asserting that questions must be limited to those related to ''the agent's factual knowledge of communications to Ms. Fisher about the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.''

July 26, 2006: Levin letter to DOJ clarifies that Senator Levin intends to ask the FBI agent ''any question which I consider relevant to the nomination of Alice Fisher.''

July 26, 2006: Senators Levin and Specter meet with the FBI Agent, as well as FBI General Counsel Valerie Caproni. FBI Agent recalls only one FBI–DOJ meeting where Alice Fisher was present but states he had regular conversations with two Criminal Division officials, David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz, regarding DoD interrogation techniques. The FBI Agent told Mr. Nahmias that the DoD interrogation of one detainee was ''completely inappropriate.''

August 1, 2006: Levin letter to Attorney General Gonzales again requesting to interview David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz.

August 30, 2006: DOJ Letter to Levin requesting a vote on Ms. Fisher's nomination. The letter does not address Senator Levin's request for interviews of David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz.

Sept. 12, 2006: Levin letter to Attorney General Gonzales reiterating request to interview David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz, but proposing in the alternative that they provide answers to questions included with the letter.

Mr. LEVIN. Let me summarize these efforts. Alice Fisher was first asked in written questions what she knew or heard about these FBI concerns. In her answers, Ms. Fisher stated that she recalled regular meetings between the FBI and Department of Justice Criminal Division officials but did not ''recall that interrogation techniques were discussed at these meetings.'' She stated, also, that she did recall ''general discussions'' with Judge Chertoff, who was heading the Criminal Division, about the ''effectiveness'' of DOD interrogation techniques and methods compared to the FBI's methods.

On June 14, 2005, Senators KENNEDY, DURBIN, and I interviewed Ms. Fisher regarding her recollections of FBI concerns about Department of Defense interrogation techniques. At that meeting, she stood by her statement that she did not ''recall'' FBI officials expressing concerns about Department of Defense methods at Guantanamo other than general concerns about their effectiveness.

To attempt to resolve the conflict in those statements, I wrote to Attorney General Gonzales in June of 2005 requesting a response to my request originally made on May 2, 2005 for the name of the FBI agent who authored the e-mail and for an opportunity to interview the Criminal Division officials named in that document, including David Nahmias, Bruce Swartz, and Laura Parsky. So May of 2005 is the first time I made the request for the name of the FBI agent who authored the e-mail and an opportunity to interview the named Criminal Division officials that were listed in that document—Nahmias, Swartz and Parsky.

On July 26, 2005, the Justice Department wrote the Judiciary Committee

Chairman ARLEN SPECTER, responding to Senator SPECTER's request for information about the May 2004 e-mail. In that letter, the Department provided a summary of an interview it had conducted with the FBI agent who authored the e-mail regarding what he knew of conversations with Alice Fisher.

In that letter, the Department said:

> [the FBI agent] did not have conversations with Ms. Fisher nor does he recall conversations in Ms. Fisher's presence about the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay. He did participate in conversations with Ms. Fisher and other department and FBI representatives about a specific detainee and that detainee's links to law enforcement efforts. These discussions focused on the information gathered regarding the information and individual and his associations, but not on his treatment or interrogation.

The letter also stated that the unnamed FBI agent's conversation with Ms. Fisher:

> . . . focused on the particular detainee described above and predated the broader conversations [in the weekly meetings] about DOD techniques with other department representatives.

And the letter concluded by expressing the hope that this would resolve any outstanding questions about Ms. Fisher's nomination.

A few days later, the Attorney General wrote to the minority leader, Democratic Leader HARRY REID, stating that the Department had taken steps in response to the Senator's concerns ''sufficient for the Senate to make an informed decision'' on Alice Fisher's nomination. In essence, what the Justice Department was saying, they will do the interview; trust them. It is up to them to decide on the sufficiency of information for the purpose of Senate confirmation. The Department was unwilling to trust Senators with the name of the FBI agent who had written e-mails despite the fact that the Senate, on a regular basis, has access to sensitive documents and information which frequently contains the names of FBI agents.

On this important issue of Senate advice and consent to a nomination, the Department was refusing to provide Senators with information relevant to our constitutional duty.

I requested that the nomination of Ms. Fisher not be considered until I had the opportunity to get the relevant information I had been seeking. The administration continued to refuse to provide the information and instead made a recess appointment of Alice Fisher to head the Criminal Division in August of 2005, and she was renominated in September of 2005.

In December of 2005, Attorney General Gonzales offered to make the FBI agent available to be interviewed by me if a Department of Justice official could be present. I declined an interview under these terms but told Attorney General Gonzales I could accept having someone from the Department of Justice Inspector General's office present.

This led to more delay, more stonewalling by the Department of Justice until this past June. With the help of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator SPECTER, and others, the Justice Department finally agreed to make the FBI agent who authors the e-mails available to be interviewed.

On July 26 of this year, more than 1 year after my request for the FBI agent's name, Senator SPECTER and I, along with FBI General Counsel Caproni, met with the FBI agent—1 year, delayed by the administration, simply providing access to the FBI agent who wrote a critically important e-mail.

There was reference made about the Senate obstructing the nomination.

(Mr. CHAFEE assumed the Chair.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the obstruction here should be directly laid at the feet of the administration which, for 1 year, refused access to an FBI agent who wrote a critically important memo regarding detainee abuse at Guantanamo and whether Ms. Fisher had any knowledge of that and, if so, what she did relative to that knowledge.

The FBI agent said in the interview that he recalled Ms. Fisher attended only one of the weekly meetings, which dealt primarily with the relationship between a particular high-value detainee and the 9/11 hijackers. He also stated that he had ''frequent conversations'' with David Nahmias, counsel to the Criminal Division's head, Mr. Chertoff. That is now the issue which comes before the Senate.

Just a couple of months ago, it was finally provided to the Senate that an FBI agent says he had frequent conversations about the issue of interrogation techniques at Guantanamo with the counsel, the attorney to the head of the Criminal Division of which the current nominee was the deputy. This is the same David Nahmias named in that FBI agent's May 2004 e-mail regarding FBI concerns about aggressive DOD techniques. The FBI agent added that he specifically shared with Mr. Nahmias his view that interrogation methods used on one detainee were ''completely inappropriate.'' This is the same David Nahmias I have repeatedly sought to interview since May of 2005.

Compare these statements of the FBI agent when interviewed in person to the assurances the Justice Department made in their July 2005 letter about the FBI agent's discussions with the Criminal Division officials, including Alice Fisher. The Justice Department wrote that the discussions at the meeting attended by Alice Fisher ''focused on the information gathered'' from one specific detainee ''but not on his treatment or interrogation. . . .'' The Justice Department never said that the FBI agent had ''frequent conversations'' about interrogation techniques being used at Guantanamo with David Nahmias, counsel to the head of the Criminal Division, or less frequent conversations with Bruce Swartz, also a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division. That wasn't disclosed—very critical information, which is the subject now of the debate. Why can we not get questions answered from David Nahmias, who we now believe, acting as counsel to Chertoff, head of the Criminal Division, of which Alice Fisher was the deputy—why can we not get David Nahmias to answer questions as to whether he shared those deeply held concerns, which were shared with him by FBI agents at Guantanamo, with Alice Fisher, the deputy head of the Department?

Following the interview, I also learned of a December 11, 2002, e-mail to Mr. Nahmias from the FBI agent I interviewed, asking for his comments on ''legal issues regarding Guantanamo Bay,'' which were apparently set out in an attachment to that e-mail.

The FBI agent's statements to me in that December 11, 2002, e-mail reveal that FBI personnel raised concerns with senior Department of Justice Criminal Division officials, including David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz, that went beyond simply questions about the ''effectiveness'' of Department of Defense techniques, which was the only FBI concern that both Chertoff and Ms. Fisher could recall during their confirmation proceedings—the only concern they ever heard about the effectiveness of DOD techniques, despite a raging debate between the FBI and the Department of Defense about the aggressiveness of those techniques and whether those techniques were abusive and indeed illegal.

To try to determine whether those FBI concerns were shared with Nahmias, counsel to the Criminal Division, and were shared with the deputy head of that Criminal Division, Ms. Fisher, I wrote to Attorney General Gonzales on August 1, 2006, to renew for the third time my request to interview these two senior Criminal Division officials, David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz.

This is a highly relevant request. The FBI agent said he discussed the Department of Defense interrogation tactics during regular meetings with Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz. Mr. Nahmias was counsel to Assistant Attorney General Chertoff, who was head of the Criminal Division. Alice Fisher and Bruce Swartz were both deputies in that division. Alice Fisher was in charge of overseeing terrorist suspect prosecutions. FBI objections to aggressive DOD interrogation tactics were a major issue, a raging issue, according to numerous e-mails sent back and forth from Guantanamo to Washington. This issue was so intense that FBI agents were wondering whether they could even be present during interrogation. They were so intense that FBI agents were writing back to headquarters saying: Can you believe what is going on down there? These differences between the FBI and the Department of Defense were so intense

that there were regular discussions, meetings, debates, and heated conversation over the tactics being used by the DOD at Guantanamo that the FBI rejected, reacted to, and shared with their headquarters.

All we needed to do—and we still need to ask—is ask, Did Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz talk to the deputy head of the Criminal Division about those concerns? Did they talk to Alice Fisher about those concerns? Alice Fisher may not recall hearing about those concerns, about abusive and aggressive tactics, but they might recall talking to her about them. If the administration has its way, we will never know. We are never going to know whether David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz discussed with Alice Fisher what we now know they knew about in their capacities—one as counsel to the Criminal Division, of which she was the deputy, and the other as a deputy director of that division.

In an August 30 response, the Justice Department ignored my request to interview Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz, urging instead that the Senate proceed to a vote on Ms. Fisher's nomination. On September 12, a week ago, I wrote back, reiterating my request for an interview, offering in the alternative that Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz respond to just a set of questions I had provided. The Justice Department has not responded to this letter.

So the Justice Department stalled for 1 year in allowing me access to an FBI agent whose information is clearly relevant to this nomination; for 1 year, they stonewalled; for 1 year, they stood in the way of information coming to the U.S. Senate; for 1 year, they set up a roadblock to a Senator who is making a request that is clearly relevant to the fitness of a person to serve as head of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice of the United States. And then finally I am given access to that agent 1 year later. And when that agent discloses that he, in fact, shared concerns about aggressive interrogation techniques with two other individuals who were working at the Criminal Division with Ms. Fisher, and when I simply say I want to talk to those two people to see if they shared those concerns with Ms. Fisher because she denied ever hearing concerns about aggressive techniques, of course, I have been denied that.

The stonewalling continues. Obstruction by the Department of Justice of access to information relevant to the nomination of Alice Fisher continues to this day.

When I wrote the Attorney General on September 12 saying: OK, if we cannot meet with these two witnesses, at least would you ask them to answer questions as to whether they shared this information they had heard about these techniques being used at Guantanamo, there is no answer from the Department of Justice. They are silent. The current form of stonewalling and obstruction by the Department of Justice of information that is relevant to this nomination is silence.

There is one other important background fact I wish to bring to the attention of the Senate. The Justice Department's inspector general has been investigating for over a year now the allegations by FBI personnel of having observed the mistreatment of detainees at Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and elsewhere. The inspector general of the Justice Department, Glenn Fine, has assured me that this review will look into ''the role of Alice Fisher, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, and other Department officials regarding detainee interrogation techniques.'' We have been waiting for the IG's findings for many months. The Senate is about to vote on Ms. Fisher's nomination before the IG report comes out.

The delay in voting on the confirmation of this nominee is directly attributable to the administration stonewalling on requests for relevant information from the Senate. Ms. Fisher is in place. She is in office. She is in an acting capacity. I have had a standing request to interview former Department of Justice Criminal Division officials, seeking relevant information, since May of 2005. This is not a last-minute request to talk to Messrs. Nahmias and Swartz. I have made four requests since May of 2005 to interview the two of them.

What is new here is that now we know, in addition to them being named in the e-mail I referred to, now we know from an FBI agent, the unnamed author of that e-mail, that he shared with those two men at the Criminal Division—one being counsel and one being a deputy director—that he shared with them the aggressive techniques, abusive techniques I have outlined, which were being utilized at Guantanamo.

Why stonewall? Why not simply just ask Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz the questions I have submitted to the Department of Justice? What is behind this?

By the way, I ask unanimous consent that the questions I asked the Attorney General to submit to Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz be printed in the RECORD at this time.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

QUESTIONS FOR DAVID NAHMIAS

1. BACKGROUND

A. What was your position during Ms. Alice Fisher's tenure as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division (July 2001 to July 2003)?

B. What was your professional relationship with Ms. Fisher? Did you report to her?

2. FBI CONCERNS REGARDING DOD INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES

The FBI agent whom I interviewed on July 26, 2006, (the ''FBI Agent'') stated that he had ''frequent contacts'' with you, during which he shared his concerns regarding aggressive Defense Department (DOD) interrogation techniques at Guantanamo Bay.

A. Did you have frequent contacts with the FBI Agent? If so, how frequently?

B. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns regarding aggressive DoD interrogation techniques? If so, what were these concerns?

C. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns regarding legal issues associated with DoD interrogation techniques? If so, what were those legal concerns?

D. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns about the alleged mistreatment of detainees? If so, what were those concerns? Did you ever hear of any incidents of detainee mistreatment at Guantanamo?

E. Did you at any time discuss FBI concerns regarding DoD interrogation techniques or the mistreatment of detainees with Alice Fisher? If not, why not? If so, please describe when these discussions occurred and what was said.

F. Did you at any time discuss FBI concerns regarding DoD interrogation techniques or the mistreatment of detainees with Bruce Swartz, Laura Parsky, or other DOJ officials in the Criminal Division? If not, why not? If so, please identify with whom you discussed these concerns, when, and what was said.

3. MAY 10, 2004 DOCUMENT

A May 10, 2004 email authored by the FBI Agent stated: ''In my weekly meetings with DOJ we often discussed DoD techniques and how they were not effective or producing intel that was reliable. Bruce Swartz (SES), Dave Nahmias (SES), Laura Parskey (now SES, GS–15 at the time) and Alice Fisher (SES Appointee) all from DOJ Criminal Division attended meetings with FBI. We all agreed DoD tactics were going to be an issue in the military commission cases. I know Mr. Swartz brought this to the attention of DoD OGC.''

A. Please identify the FBI and DOJ personnel who attended these meetings. How frequently did Alice Fisher attend these meetings?

B. How often were DoD interrogation techniques discussed at these weekly meetings? During what time period did these discussions occur?

C. Did you believe that DoD interrogation techniques would be an issue for the military commissions? If so, in what way?

During my interview with the FBI Agent, he recalled one DOJ–FBI meeting where Ms. Fisher was present. The FBI Agent stated that the main subject of that meeting was the possible relationship between a particular high value detainee at Guantanamo and the 9/11 hijackers, but also discussed was how the Defense Department was ''pushing hard'' on the FBI on-site commander to ''speed up'' getting information out of this particular detainee and others.

D. Do you recall the DOJ–FBI meeting at which Ms. Fisher was present and FBI concerns about DoD ''pushing hard'' on FBI personnel to ''speed up'' getting information was discussed?

E. What actions were taken in response to these concerns?

4. DECEMBER 11, 2002 DOCUMENT

A December 11, 2002 email from the FBI Agent to you is entitled ''Fwd: Legal Issues re: Guantanamo Bay'' and requests your comments, apparently on an attachment to that email.

A. Are you familiar with this email?

B. Did the legal issues raised in this email relate to DoD interrogation techniques at Guantanamo Bay?

C. Did you bring this email to the attention of Ms. Fisher? Did you discuss the legal issues raised in this email with her? If so, what actions were taken in response?

D. Please provide a copy of any communication you provided in response to the December 11, 2002 document.

QUESTIONS FOR BRUCE SWARTZ

1. BACKGROUND

A. What was your position during Ms. Alice Fisher's tenure as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division (July 2001 to July 2003)?

B. What was your professional relationship with Ms. Fisher? Did you report to her?

2. FBI CONCERNS REGARDING DOD INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES

The FBI agent whom I interviewed on July 26, 2006, (the ''FBI Agent'') stated that he had ''contacts'' with you during the period when FBI personnel at Guantanamo Bay were raising concerns regarding aggressive Defense Department interrogation techniques.

A. Did you have contact with the FBI Agent? If so, how often?

B. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns regarding aggressive DoD interrogation techniques? If so, what were these concerns?

C. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns regarding legal issues associated with DoD interrogation techniques? If so, what were those legal concerns?

D. Were you aware of FBI personnel's concerns about the alleged mistreatment of detainees? If so, what were those concerns? Did you ever hear of any incidents of detainee mistreatment at Guantanamo?

E. Did you at any time discuss FBI concerns regarding DoD interrogation techniques or the mistreatment of detainees with Alice Fisher? If not, why not? If so, please describe when these discussions occurred and what was said.

F. Did you at any time discuss FBI concerns regarding DoD interrogation techniques or the mistreatment of detainees with David Nahmias, Laura Parsky, or other DOJ officials in the Criminal Division? If not, why not? If so, please identify with whom you discussed these concerns, when, and what was said.

3. MAY 10, 2004 DOCUMENT

A May 10, 2004 email authored by the FBI Agent stated: ''In my weekly meetings with DOJ we often discussed DoD techniques and how they were not effective or producing intel that was reliable. Bruce Swartz (SES), Dave Nahmias (SES), Laura Parsky (now SES, GS–15 at the time) and Alice Fisher (SES Appointee) all from DOJ Criminal Division attended meetings with FBI. We all agreed DoD tactics were going to be an issue in the military commission cases.''

A. Please identify the FBI and DOJ personnel who attended these meetings. How frequently did Alice Fisher attend these meetings?

B. How often were DoD interrogation techniques discussed at these weekly meetings? During what time period did these discussions occur?

C. Did you believe that DoD interrogation techniques would be an issue for the military commissions? If so, in what way?

During my interview with the FBI Agent, he recalled one DOJ–FBI meeting where Ms. Fisher was present. The FBI Agent stated that the main subject of that meeting was the possible relationship between a particular high value detainee at Guantanamo and the 9/11 hijackers, but also discussed was how the Defense Department was ''pushing hard'' on the FBI on-site commander to ''speed up'' getting information out of this particular detainee and others.

D. Do you recall the DOJ–FBI meeting at which Ms. Fisher was present and FBI concerns about DoD ''pushing hard'' on FBI personnel to ''speed up'' getting information was discussed?

E. What actions were taken in response to these concerns?

4. DISCUSSIONS WITH DOD OFFICIALS

In the May 10, 2004, document regarding FBI concerns over DoD interrogation techniques, the FBI Agent states ''I know Mr. Swartz brought this to the attention of DoD [Office of General Counsel (OGC)].'' In her written answers during the confirmation process, Alice Fisher recalled discussing FBI concerns about the effectiveness of DoD interrogation techniques with members of the DoD OGC, or being present when such discussions took place. Did you bring FBI concerns regarding DoD interrogation techniques to the attention of DoD OGC? If so, please identify any meetings or discussions with DoD OGC in this regard, when and where those meetings or discussion occurred, and what was discussed. Did Ms. Fisher participate in any such meeting or discussion?

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, why is the administration more interested in keeping information from the Senate relevant to the knowledge of senior Department of Justice Criminal Division officials, including Alice Fisher, of the administration's policies and practices on the interrogation of detainees?

What is going to happen again is that the administration's obstructionism will result in the Senate acting without relevant information. I know there will be many who will say we have more than enough information, and for many in this body, they have every right to vote based on the information they have. But when any Member of this body seeks relevant information on a confirmation, every Member of this body ought to stand in unison behind that request.

We are all either going to be or have been in the position of seeking relevant information to a confirmation. We have all been in this position, and many of us will be in this position again. This should be treated as an institutional matter.

There is no reason these questions that have been addressed to Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz should not be answered. I believe this body, as a body, should ask the Attorney General to have these questions answered. There is no reason any relevant information to a confirmation should be denied to a Senator, providing the information is relevant and germane, and clearly this is.

Again, I want to emphasize, this is not a last-minute request. This is something which arose from a meeting that was held with the FBI agent in question back in July. But the request for these meetings with Messrs. Swartz and Nahmias were made as early as May of 2005. They have been asked for on four occasions since then.

Do David Nahmias and Bruce Swartz recall the FBI agent sharing his concerns about aggressive DOD interrogation techniques? He does. Do they remember? Did those two senior officials share those FBI concerns about DOD techniques with Alice Fisher? If so, what was her response? These are directly relevant questions.

The pattern of this administration is transparent. The administration stonewalls on providing requested information. It then accuses Senators of delay and demands that the Senate act to confirm their nominees without the information. The administration follows this pattern because it works, and it works because this institution allows it to work.

Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARTINEZ). The Senator has 32 minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the remainder of my time, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I think Alice Fisher is a fine person. My colleague and those on the other side are never happy with whatever the President does to try to protect this country.

He looked the American people in the eye—after he was elected, we had 9/11—and he said: I am going to use every power I have to prosecute, investigate, and stop those who threaten the safety of the American people. That is my responsibility as Commander in Chief. I took an oath to do that, and I intend to do that.

And he appointed some good people. Now all we have had is second-guessing, second-guessing, second-guessing, complaint, complaint, complaint, hold up nominees; never happy.

Somebody has to do something. I remember right after 9/11. What happened? We had a national epiphany. We found out in a spasm of political activity years ago, just like in many ways today, the Congress, to placate critics and liberals and activists, prohibited the FBI from talking to the CIA. They prohibited CIA agents because they heard some of them had made a mistake somewhere—there were allegations of that—that they couldn't talk, when they were out doing undercover operations trying to obtain human intelligence in dangerous areas of the world, with people who had criminal records and might have done something wrong.

What happened after 9/11? We said: Why didn't we have any human intelligence? What are the problems here? What we concluded was that both of those proposals, for example, were wrong, and we promptly reversed them. We changed the law.

That is all I am saying about this flap—and I have been involved with it on the Armed Services Committee, and I have been involved with it on the Judiciary Committee. We have had 30 or more hearings investigating the people of this country who are trying to preserve, protect, and defend this Nation. That is who we investigate and complain about. Do we ever hear about how to better catch the terrorists? It is time we start thinking about defending and protecting this country rather than to prosecute and block and obstruct those who have been giving their every waking moment to make us safer.

My good colleague from Michigan is such an able Senator. I am sorry this

didn't all work out to his satisfaction. The Department of Justice, the administration offered this, he didn't like that. They offered that, he didn't like that. Maybe sometimes one gets to thinking there has been a little strategy around here—and I have seen it in case after case that began with Miguel Estrada—for the Members on the other side to demand records, statements, internal conversations, internal memoranda to which they are not entitled. They don't want people coming in and demanding everything they said to everybody who came into their office. So they come up with this, and they ask for all these items. Then when they don't get them, they say: Obstruction, obstruction; we can't vote for the nominee. Now they have created an excuse to vote against a very fine nominee, when the person is doing an excellent job and ought to be confirmed so they can continue to be even more effective in the war against terror.

I have seen it time and again. With regard to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, one of our Senators down here complaining had a whole host of those nominees held up for years. The court ended up deciding the University of Michigan higher education, affirmative action case with far less judges than should have been on that panel. There has been some real concern expressed about that.

Obstructing, holding up, and delaying nominees is not the right thing to do. We have important governmental actions to do here.

Let me tell my colleagues about Alice Fisher. She has proven herself in the Criminal Division. Under her leadership, the division has made a number of great strides. The Criminal Division has been responsible for the national coordination of all national security prosecutions, of all the criminal cases in Federal court, including domestic and international terrorism and counterintelligence matters.

Alice Fisher has also worked closely with the intelligence community. That is her responsibility. We had too much of a wall of separation. Sure, she is to be engaged in these issues to assess potential threat information to our national security and disrupt potential attacks against this country.

Alice Fisher provides advice to U.S. attorneys. I was a U.S. attorney for 12 years. There are 93 of them around this country covering the whole country. She provides them advice on terrorism matters, including such areas as terrorist acts in the United States and abroad, weapons of mass destruction, principles of extraterritorial jurisdiction, and use of classified evidence and intelligence information in prosecutions. Alice Fisher also established the Office of Justice for Victims of Overseas Terrorism.

During her tenure, the division's counterterrorism section, which Fisher also had previously organized and supervised as Deputy Assistant Attorney General, has prosecuted numerous ''material support'' terrorism cases, cases against people who have given material support to terrorists to further their ability to attack and kill innocent people in this country and abroad. Those prosecutions have been located throughout the country and include alleged planners supporting terrorism in Georgia, Ohio, Florida, New York, Virginia, and California; defendants facing extradition from the United Kingdom and other foreign countries; international terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaida, Hezbollah, FARC—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—and domestic terrorists.

Under the direction of the Attorney General, the Justice Department is placing increased emphasis on targeting gangs. Fisher was chosen by the Attorney General to head that effort. Under her guidance, the Criminal Division has created the National Gang Targeting, Enforcement and Coordination Center, a multiagency initiative led by the Criminal Division, with participation from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Bureau of Prisons, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the U.S. Marshals Service. Those are agencies she coordinates.

The gang initiative will create law enforcement strategies and facilitate operations across agency lines aimed at dismantling national and transnational violent gangs. Fisher also established a new gang squad of experienced gang prosecutors who coordinate nationwide prosecutions and make them more effective.

Under her leadership, in partnership with various U.S. Attorney's Offices and the Drug Enforcement Administration, more than 130 defendants were recently indicted and hundreds of thousands of dollars seized as part of an international operation targeting the trafficking of black tar heroin in the United States. The multistate investigation, called Operation Black Gold Rush, included arrests in 15 U.S. cities and 10 indictments in eight Federal judicial districts, along with State charges. More than 17 kilograms of black tar heroin, a potent form of heroin that is dark and sticky in appearance, were seized during this operation.

As Assistant Attorney General, she also has been involved now, and earlier when she was the Deputy Assistant Attorney General, with the Enron task force. We remember when everybody talked about Enron that something had to be done about it. Many people doubted anything would be done about it. President Bush announced that we were going to have integrity in big business, and big business people who cheat and harm their employees and others in this country will be vigorously prosecuted. She was involved in that effort.

She supervised the Enron task force. It has investigated that entire scheme created by the executives of Enron to deceive the investing public, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and others. The case has resulted in convictions of top Enron executives. Many said that wouldn't happen, but they have been indicted, convicted, assets seized, and those include Ken Lay and Jeffrey Skilling, the two top people.

As a member of the corporate fraud task force—and we need to be aggressive in prosecuting corporate fraud in America—Fisher coordinates with other agencies on corporate fraud policies and investigations.

She has supervised recent corporate fraud prosecutions involving defendants from AIG, BP, and Qwest. She is not afraid to take on the big boys. She has done so effectively and courageously.

She is cochair of the Law Enforcement Subcommittee of the President's Identity Theft Task Force. That is an important issue in our country. I have a staff person, and someone stole her identity and used it. She spent years trying to clear her record and get the situation straightened out.

Under her direction, this subcommittee is focusing on enhancing coordination among law enforcement agencies, the Federal Trade Commission, and others to maximize the Government's capabilities to curb the international problem of identity fraud.

Mr. President, I know you served so ably in Florida as a mayor and then later as a member of the President's Cabinet. Florida and other areas received terrific losses during Hurricane Katrina. We will probably spend over $100 billion on trying to help that whole region recover and a whole city, New Orleans, that was flooded. Having been a prosecutor in Mobile on the gulf coast after hurricanes, I can tell you that fraud does occur. You want to get money out to people who are hurting in a hurry. You can't ask for the same amount of time and evidence that you would normally ask. People need help right now. They have no place else to go. But people take advantage of that. The scum of the Earth take advantage of the generosity of the American people by often slipping in as contractors or claimed beneficiaries, lying about losses, to get money that is supposed to go to people who are hurting.

Well, just days after Hurricane Katrina hit the Nation, Attorney General Gonzales established the Katrina Fraud Task Force. This task force would send a message right off the bat that fraud would be investigated and prosecuted, and it was to focus on fraud and corruption resulting from the hurricanes. He named Fisher the Katrina Fraud Task Force chairman. As chairman, Alice Fisher quickly set up a forward-looking strategic plan and resource allocation for this interagency task force, among all the other things she was doing, to investigate and prosecute fraud arising from Hurricane Katrina and related disasters. Under her guidance, the task force has made great strides to combat fraud.

As of July 25, the task force had charged 371 defendants in 29 separate Federal districts. A majority of the cases charged to date have involved emergency benefits fraud against both FEMA and the American Red Cross—charitable donation fraud. People have gone out and claimed they are raising money to help people, and they just steal it. What kind of sorry person is that, who would ask people to sacrifice and give help to someone else, and then steal the money? We have that, and she is working against it.

Other cases have involved Government contract fraud. We have people taking advantage of the contracting process and cheating when they are supposed to follow through and do certain amounts of work for the Government. They have certified they have done it, they get paid, and then we find out they didn't do it. Some of them need to go to jail.

The task force has therefore been taking a number of proactive measures to identify, investigate and prosecute these kinds of cases.

Alice Fisher created the Katrina Fraud Task Force Joint Command Center in Baton Rouge where analysts, agents, and inspectors from the Inspector General and Federal law enforcement communities co-locate—these are all of the agencies, State and local—they get together to focus on procurement fraud and public corruption which could result from the over $100 billion reconstruction money flowing into the affected region. As of July 25, 2006, the Command Center has received and referred 6,424 complaints to various Federal agencies.

The task force has provided training for the Inspector General community. Each one of these agencies have their own Inspector General, and many of those Inspector Generals are not familiar with hurricane work. They train all of them so that the Commerce Department, the Agriculture Department, the Coast Guard, and other agencies involved with this relief effort can have watchdogs within their agencies trained to prevent fraud.

I am going to tell my colleagues, we have had a problem in this Nation, and we still do, of public corruption. There are public officials, whether in hurricane areas or not, who are taking money, extorting bribes and that sort of thing. Unfortunately, that is true. For the most part, we are a Nation of high integrity, but there are those who don't meet those standards and need to be prosecuted. I would say, in many cases, the Federal investigators are the ones who really have the best opportunity, the independence, the distance, from the situation to handle these cases, and they just have to do it. They have been rightfully praised over the years for their leadership in that area.

Under Fisher's leadership, the Public Integrity Section has prosecuted major public corruption cases, including the ongoing Jack Abramoff investigation, which has to date resulted in five pleas of guilty and in a conviction after trial of David Safavian, the former chief of staff of the General Services Administration—the GSA, a big Government agency here in Washington, their chief of staff. In addition, Fisher supervised the successful prosecution of former Alabama Governor Don Siegelman and former HealthSouth CEO Richard Scrushy for conspiracy and public corruption offenses.

Fisher was recently named by the Deputy Attorney General to establish a national procurement fraud initiative. Now, we have a lot of money that is paid out as a result of Government procurement by our military and other agencies, and there is a good bit of fraud there, so she is forming a national initiative on that.

Since Fisher's tenure began, the Department of Justice has made headway in aggressively prosecuting crimes against children. A lot of people say the Department of Justice shouldn't be involved in those kinds of things; that it is not important, and we need to focus on other big issues. But I submit the Department of Justice's leadership and work in these cases can make quite a difference.

For example, the Criminal Division is currently coordinating 18 national child pornography operations targeting hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of customers or participants in mass child pornography distribution schemes. In addition, as of July 26, 2006, the Innocence Lost Initiative targeting children victimized through prostitution has resulted in 228 open investigations, 543 arrests, 86 complaints, 121 informations or indictments, and 94 convictions in both the Federal and State systems.

Fisher is working on the implementation of the Adam Walsh Act. We all know John Walsh, what a tragic story he has lived through and, as a result of it, has become a national leader, well-known throughout this country for his work in the protection of children. So she is working now to create the mechanism to fully implement the Adam Walsh Act, which was passed by Congress just recently to combat child exploitation, and the Department's new initiative targeted at protecting children from predators, Project Safe Childhood, another time-consuming and challenging activity.

Fisher serves as a key member of the Department of Justice Intellectual Property Task Force and oversees the Computer Crimes and Intellectual Property Section of the Criminal Division. Under Fisher's leadership, the Department has increased its prosecution of these cases and enhanced international partnerships in this area. It is important that we do operate internationally.

As Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, Fisher developed and implemented a strategic plan to focus and prioritize the mission of the Division's approximately 750 employees. This management plan has organized the Division around the following priorities and goals: Supporting the national security mission. Supporting the national security mission—that wasn't the No. 1 goal of the Department of Justice Criminal Division when I was a prosecutor. This is as a result of the leadership of the President and the Attorney General and Alice Fisher.

So the top goals are supporting the national security mission, protecting this country from attack, ensuring Government integrity, prosecuting fraud and corruption, ensuring market integrity. That is—in the free market, the banks, financial communities, businesses, securities, making sure that there is integrity in that. They have a record of achievement. Combating violent crime is still a part of the duties, particularly gangs and drug trafficking and protecting against crimes on the Internet and crimes against children.

So this is a very fine, hard-working public servant who gives her every waking hour to trying to promote justice and protecting this country from attack. What she can say and what she can't say in response to probing and fishing expeditions from Members of Congress about meetings and conversations and top-secret security activities that she may be involved in is not her decision; it is really the Executive Branch deciding how much of these actions should be made public. So it is not her fault.

I submit to my colleagues that she wasn't involved in any of these issues that people are so hot about. She didn't set the policies. She didn't write the memos. She was lower down in the chain of command at that time. That wasn't her responsibility. She is being drawn into this now so that we can continue to have complaints about the efforts of this President and his team to aggressively find, identify, prosecute, and convict those who would threaten the people of this United States.

So I am impressed with Alice Fisher. She was a young, aggressive woman when I met her. She didn't have a whole lot of experience. I questioned her about that. But I could sense that she had the drive to be successful, to serve our country, and she has utilized every opportunity she could to further the interests of law enforcement and justice in America. I think she is a good nominee. In a different time, she would go through just like that; it would not be a problem. But here we are with an election coming up, and the theme here is that this administration is abusing prisoners and being mean to unlawful combatants and terrorists, and they are trying to maintain that theme and drag her into it. They shouldn't do that.

She needs to be confirmed. She needs to have the full authority of the office of chief of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. She will be

more effective if she has been confirmed and holds the office permanently. She will do a great job, I believe. Her record has proven that. I urge my colleagues to support this nominee.

Mr. President, I thank the chair and yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to speak in support of the nomination of Alice Stevens Fisher to be Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division of the United States Department of Justice.

Ms. Fisher has an outstanding academic record. She received a bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt in 1989. At Vanderbilt, she was a member of the Gamma Beta Phi Honorary Society. She received her law degree from the Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law in 1992. She served as Note & Comment Editor of the Catholic University Law Review, which was a mark of distinction. After law school, she was an associate with Sullivan & Cromwell from 1992–1996.

She served as Deputy Special Counsel to the United States Senate Special Committee to Investigate the Whitewater Development Corporation from 1995 to 1996.

She was an associate of the law firm of Latham & Watkins from 1996 to 2000, and was made a partner in 2001.

From 2001 until 2003, she served as the Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.

She went back to Latham & Watkins from 2003 to 2005. On August 31, 2005, she was appointed as the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division via recess appointment, which is her current position.

She is a member of a number of bar associations, and she has extensive writings on a number of subjects.

I ask unanimous consent that a full statement of her qualifications be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ALICE STEVENS FISHER, NOMINEE—ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, CRIMINAL DIVISION

Alice Stevens Fisher was nominated by President Bush to be Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice on April 5, 2005. The President appointed Ms. Fisher to that position via a recess appointment on August 31, 2005.

Ms. Fisher has had a distinguished legal career and brings over ten years of experience to the Department of Justice.

After graduating from the Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law in 1992, Ms. Fisher became a member of the law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell.

In 1995, Ms. Fisher served as Deputy Special Counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee Investigating Whitewater Development Corporation and Related Matters, where she supported the Senate's investigation and assisted in drafting the final report.

In 1996, Ms. Fisher returned to private practice and joined the law firm of Latham & Watkins. At Latham, Ms. Fisher's practice focused on the representation of corporations in government investigations and complex civil litigation. In 2001 she became a partner.

From 2001 until 2003, Ms. Fisher served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.

As Deputy Assistant Attorney General, she supervised the Divisions Counter-Terrorism Section, Fraud Section, Appellate Section, Capital Case Unit, and Alien Smuggling Task Force.

In 2003, Ms. Fisher returned to Latham & Watkins as a partner.

On April 5, 2005, President Bush nominated Ms, Fisher to be Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice. She was appointed to that position via a recess appointment on August 31, 2005.

SUPPORT FOR ALICE FISHER

''It is with the greatest enthusiasm that I write this letter in support of Alice Fisher. . . From personal experience, I know that she will serve the President and the country with great dedication, integrity, and talent. Her judgment and skills as both a lawyer and a leader are unparalleled.'' Michael Chertoff, Secretary to the Department of Homeland Security.

''During my tenure as Solicitor General, I had the privilege and pleasure of working with Ms. Fisher. . . I found Ms. Fisher to be an extremely accomplished, able and dedicated public servant. In my view, she is a superb choice to head the Criminal Division and I enthusiastically urge that the Committee and the full Senate vote to confirm her appointment.'' Theodore B. Olson, former United States Solicitor General.

''Ms. Fisher's experience as a litigator and policy-maker, as well as her strong, positive relationship with the law enforcement community, makes her an excellent choice to lead the Criminal Division. The F.O.P. has no doubt that she will continue to be an outstanding Assistant Attorney General, and we urge the Judiciary Committee to expeditiously approve her nomination.'' Chuck Canterbury, National President, Fraternal Order of Police.

''From the commencement of my appointment, my staff and I worked closely with Ms. Fisher, who at that time served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division in the Department of Justice. In all of my numerous dealings with Ms. Fisher, I found her to be a person of tremendous legal acumen and good judgment, extremely hard working, and a person committed to upholding the highest standards of the Department of Justice and the legal profession.'' Mike A. Battle, United States Attorney for the Western District of New York.

ALICE STEVENS FISHER—ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, CRIMINAL DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Birth: January 27, 1967, Louisville, KY

Legal Residence: Virginia

Education: B.A., Vanderbilt University, 1989, Gamma Beta Phi Honorary Society

J.D., Columbus School Of Law, Catholic University of America, 1992, Note & Comment Editor, Catholic University Law Review

Employment: Associate, Sullivan & Cromwell, 1992–1996

Deputy Special Counsel, U.S. Senate Special Committee to Investigate

Whitewater Development Corporation & Related Matters, 1995–1996

Associate, Latham & Watkins, 1996–2000

Partner, Latham & Watkins, 2001

Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice, 2001–2003

Partner, Latham & Watkins, 2003–2005

Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice (recess appointment August 31, 2005), 2005-present.

Selected Activities: Member, Virginia Bar Association, 1992–1996

Member, American Bar Association, 1992–1996, 1998–Present

Barrister, Edward Bennett Williams Inn of Court, 2002–Present

Member, The Kentuckian Society

Member, The Federalist Society, National Practitioner's Advisory Council, 2004.

Mr. SPECTER. Ms. Fisher's nomination has been delayed for a very long period of time. In the meantime, Ms. Fisher has been serving as Assistant Attorney General for more than a year. She has handled some very high profile investigations and has done an outstanding job.

When she appeared before the Judiciary Committee, she presented herself very well. She is extremely well-qualified for the position.

Since her nomination, some objections have been raised and her nomination has been delayed because an email memorandum, authored by an FBI agent, lists her as an attendee at a meeting where Department of Defense Guantanamo interrogation techniques were discussed. Ms. Fisher was not responsible for the interrogations conducted at Guantanamo by the Department of Defense or the FBI. She did not approve or direct the interrogation or interrogation techniques, and she was not involved in the approval of the Office of Legal Counsel's memorandum, the so-called Bybee memorandum.

Senator LEVIN, before withdrawing a hold on Ms. Fisher's nomination, wanted to talk to the FBI agent who was identified in the file in connection with Ms. Fisher's nomination. However, when the matter became protracted and delayed, the Attorney General asked me if I would meet with Senator LEVIN and the FBI agent. It was the practice of the Department of Justice not to make an FBI agent available to Senators but only to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I decided to honor that request even though I did not see the connection between Ms. Fisher and either the FBI or the Department of Defense's interrogation techniques.

Senator LEVIN wished to have the FBI agent appear, not with the customary representative from the Department of Justice, Office of Legislative Affairs, but instead with someone from the Department of Justice Inspector General's Office. We accommodated Senator LEVIN by having a representative from the FBI's General Counsel's office attend the meeting. We also accommodated Senator LEVIN on the location of the meeting, which was held

in his office and I was happy to meet there.

The interview with the FBI agent lasted approximately 1 hour, during which we had an extensive discussion about what the FBI agent knew about interrogation techniques. The meeting barely, barely, barely touched on Ms. Fisher. Nothing in the interview showed any misconduct or impropriety on the part of Ms. Fisher. Nothing contradicted her testimony. She was barely involved.

Following that meeting, Senator LEVIN made a request to see two other individuals who had no connection with Ms. Fisher and no connection with her nomination.

I am glad we have come to this point. I have included extensive documentation in the record demonstrating the way the Department of Justice responded in honoring Senator LEVIN's requests. I have worked with Senator LEVIN for 26 years. He is a very thorough and effective Senator. When he wanted to see this FBI agent, we worked it out so that he saw the FBI agent.

I am glad the hold is off. I understand we are going to vote on Ms. Fisher. I believe this comes under Shakespeare's edict: All's well that ends well. And now we will go on to work on some other important matters, such as trying to get habeas corpus in effect on the Guantanamo issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Pennsylvania for his words.

After I tried for about a year to get the Attorney General to make available an FBI agent so we could talk to him about a memo that he wrote naming Ms. Fisher, naming three other members of the Criminal Division that she was the Deputy Director of, as being very aware of the debate between the FBI and the Department of Defense over interrogation practices at Guantanamo, I was unsuccessful for about a year to simply get information.

Stonewalling has occurred in this case. The delay that has occurred in this case is directly attributable to the refusal of the Department of Justice to provide information to this Senator.

After that meeting—and I thank the good Senator from Pennsylvania for arranging it; it wouldn't have happened without him—after that meeting, something became clear which needed to be clarified. I sent a letter to the Department of Justice on that matter. It is a very important matter involving whether Mr. Nahmias, the counsel to the Criminal Division who was aware of the tactics which were being used at Guantanamo, was personally involved in knowing about this debate between the FBI—it did not like what it saw—which objected to the tactics being used and was very vehement about it and did not want his agents to participate in the interrogations and wrote e-mails to the Department of Justice saying: You cannot believe what is going on down here. There was this vehement dispute between FBI and the Department of Defense on interrogation tactics. This is the background for what is in the headlines today.

At the discussion which occurred in my office, which Senator SPECTER accurately described, the FBI agent indicated that Ms. Fisher's connection related to one discussion he could remember about a specific event, not abusive interrogation techniques but, rather, about whether one of the detainees down there had been involved in September 11. That is what his recollection was. We accept that. We have no basis to not accept it.

However, something came out at that July meeting which is critically important. He said he had regular discussions on this subject about the detainee treatment at Guantanamo with the counsel to the Criminal Division, David Nahmias, and another Deputy Director, Bruce Swartz. We simply wanted to find out from the two of them, particularly from Mr. Nahmias since he served in the same department of the Justice Department with Alice Fisher, and the Deputy Director of that department, whether he, David Nahmias, had shared the information that he got from the FBI that wrote the e-mail, with the Deputy Director of that department.

For reasons that I cannot fathom, the Justice Department is still stonewalling answering questions which are directly related to the nomination. That question is, Did Mr. Nahmias and Mr. Swartz share with the Deputy Director of their own department, the Criminal Justice Department, what they had learned from this FBI agent about the raging dispute going on between the FBI and the Department of Defense over these tactics?

We asked the Attorney General if we could talk with Mr. Nahmias. By the way, this is the fourth request I had made to meet with Mr. Nahmias. I started in May of 2005 because he was named, along with Ms. Fisher, and Mr. Swartz as having been present at meetings during which these tactics were discussed. So he was right in that e-mail. We asked four times to see Mr. Nahmias. We have been rejected every time.

But now, in my office, we learned something else which is significant, which is relevant, which is going to go unanswered. It is going to go unanswered because the Department of Justice will not even answer the questions which I want them to put to Mr. Nahmias.

What I finally have done out of exasperation was to write to the Attorney General saying: You obviously are not going to produce two relevant people so I can ask them very basic information—did they share the information they had about these abuses and these raging debates between FBI and DOD. You are not going to allow me to ask those two people whether they shared that with the Deputy Director of their department. You are simply not going to do it. Would you at least ask the two of them questions in writing about whether they shared that information with Ms. Fisher?

The answer of the Department of Justice is silence—stone, cold, silence—to my request.

That is where we are. I will be voting against this nomination because of the stonewalling by the Department of Justice of legitimate, reasonable requests for information which are still outstanding, relative to Nahmias and to Swartz.

That is unacceptable. It puts us in a position of voting on nominees without relevant information which we should have. The delay—and I emphasize this—the delay in this matter is not mine. The delay is the refusal of the Department of Justice to provide information, to provide witnesses for a year and a half.

Without the help of my good friend from Pennsylvania, Senator SPECTER, we never could have even received the information that we got from the FBI agent, and, as he knows, I am grateful to him for that. I can now only hope that he will join in asking the Department of Justice—it can come after this nominee's vote—I would hope he would consider joining the request of the Department of Justice that we have this information for the record as being relevant to the matters we are debating.

I close by saying I believe it is unacceptable, it is wrong for the Department of Justice to deny the Senate relevant information. We are going to end up voting now on this nomination of Ms. Fisher without it. It should not be that way. I will express my opposition to the stonewalling tactics of the Department of Justice by voting no on this nomination, again, with my thanks to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for the help that he did provide in this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, there are many things I can say in response to what the distinguished Senator from Michigan has said, but silence is the preferable course.

Instead, I ask, as the representative of the majority leader, to set the vote at 5:45 with the expectation there will be no other speakers. I ask unanimous consent we set the vote at 5:45.

Mr. LEVIN. I understand we have a thumbs up from the rear of the Chamber. I have no objection.

Mr. SPECTER. People who run the Senate, staffers, have just consented to the request.

Mr. LEVIN. They didn't consent, but they indicated to me there was no objection, to be technically correct.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I speak today on the nomination of Ms. Alice Fisher to be Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the

Department of Justice. Ms. Fisher, a native from Louisville, KY, is without question very well qualified to fill this position. As a fellow Kentuckian, it is an honor to address her nomination today, and I give her my full support.

I firmly believe that Ms. Fisher possesses the qualifications needed for this position. Her dedication and personal drive stand as an example to us all.

Ms. Fisher has served as Assistant Attorney General for over a year now. In this time she has coordinated with law enforcement agencies on a variety of issues, including antiterrorism prosecutions, public corruption cases, and child pornography cases.

Prior to this appointment, Ms. Fisher served within the Department of Justice managing both the Counterterrorism and Fraud Sections of the Department. In this time, she was responsible for coordinating the Department's national counterterrorism activities, including matters related to terrorist financing and the USA PATRIOT Act.

Throughout her tenure at the Department of Justice, Ms. Fisher has shown time and time again that she is a true leader and leads by example. Many of her colleagues testified before Congress this past year about her unwavering work habits and her true commitment to justice.

This is the type of leader that we need in our Government. I urge my colleagues across the aisle who have held up her nomination in the past to not let partisan politics get in the way this time. We need to move forward with her nomination. Not only does she have a proven record, but it was approved overwhelmingly by the Judiciary Committee, and now she deserves a fair up-or-down vote on the Senate floor.

I am confident that when she receives this vote that she will be confirmed, and I wish her continued success in her position.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I will yield back my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield back my time, also. I am willing to do that as Senator SPECTER has yielded his back. What time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has 13 minutes. The minority leader has 59 minutes. The majority leader has 27 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. I wonder if the Senator from Pennsylvania would agree that we can put in a quorum call and the time be deducted proportionally from all of the remaining speakers.

Mr. SPECTER. That is acceptable. Having set the vote at 5:45, we have given our colleagues ample notice. If somebody wants to speak in the next 14 minutes, they certainly would be at liberty to do that. My hunch is that we will have a quorum call for 14 minutes. The important thing is that we have finished the discussion on a reasonably harmonious note.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Alice S. Fisher, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General? On this question, the yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that if present and voting, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) would vote ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAMBLISS). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 61, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 251 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Alexander	Domenici	Murkowski
Allard	Dorgan	Nelson (NE)
Allen	Ensign	Pryor
Bayh	Enzi	Roberts
Bennett	Feingold	Salazar
Bond	Frist	Santorum
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Shelby
Burns	Gregg	Smith
Burr	Hagel	Snowe
Chafee	Hatch	Specter
Chambliss	Hutchison	Stevens
Coburn	Inhofe	Sununu
Cochran	Isakson	Talent
Collins	Kyl	Thomas
Cornyn	Lincoln	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Voinovich
DeMint	Martinez	Warner
DeWine	McCain	
Dole	McConnell	

NAYS—35

Baucus	Feinstein	Mikulski
Biden	Harkin	Murray
Bingaman	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Jeffords	Obama
Byrd	Johnson	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Carper	Kohl	Rockefeller
Clinton	Lautenberg	Sarbanes
Conrad	Leahy	Schumer
Dayton	Levin	Stabenow
Dodd	Lieberman	Wyden
Durbin	Menendez	

NOT VOTING—4

Akaka	Kennedy
Coleman	Landrieu

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

I now request the opportunity to address the Senate under that provision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the Senator will withhold just a minute, please.

Mr. WARNER. Yes, Mr. President, without losing my right to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President is notified of the Senate's action with respect to this nomination.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate now returns to legislative session.

The Senator's request is agreed to. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

PRAYER IN THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, at the present time, the members of the Armed Services Committee of the Senate and the members of the Armed Services Committee of the House are in a conference. A great deal of confidentiality is attached to that procedure. I do not in any way intend to violate that confidentiality.

But before the conference—and this is not a matter of confidentiality—is a provision in the bill of the House of Representatives which is related to military chaplains. I will read from the House bill.

> Each Chaplain shall have the prerogative to pray according to the dictates of the Chaplain's own conscience, except as must be limited by military necessity, with any such limitation being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible.

That is the end of the proposed bill language. That is what I would like to address at this time.

I first want to say that the Senate has no such provision, and therefore we have to resolve the difference between the two bodies. The House of Representatives put this provision in during markup, which is the time they go over their bill. Another amendment was offered in that markup and rejected. It is referred to as follows: ''Amendment to H.R. 5122, offered by Mr. Israel,'' Member of Congress, and it provides in section 590, which I just read, relating to military chaplains: at the end of the quoted matter inserted by each of the subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e), insert the following: '', except that chaplains shall demonstrate sensitivity, respect, and tolerance for all faiths present on each occasion at which prayers are offered''.

I personally have not decided on what version I personally feel should

address this problem, so I remain of an open mind. But I remain very firmly of a mind that in the brief time that we have had an opportunity to look at it and examine it here on the Senate side, the time is inadequate to address an issue which I regard as of enormous importance. This is an issue that I would hope this Chamber would have the opportunity to discuss, whether to put into law a provision as proposed by the House or a provision as proposed by Mr. ISRAEL, a Member of Congress, which addresses the perspectives of this issue from a different angle. This is just an example of the diversity of views on this important issue.

Among the conferees—I cannot name names; I will not—there is a strong division, those in favor of certain language other than what is in the House bill. Some conferees think that the provision by Mr. ISRAEL should be included. So there is at this time just an enormous uncertainty among the conferees.

The House book that contains what we call report language, which is a very helpful instrument to try to explain the background of how provisions come into our legislation, trying to explain what some of the words mean, this book is silent. The only report language is a recitation, exactly, of the proposed bill language. So there is no guidance that Congress is providing on this important phrase.

I hasten to point out that, as is the case in just about all matters that we take up in the Armed Services Committee regarding the annual authorization bill, the Secretary of Defense transmits to us opinions that he has, on behalf of the Department, with regard to proposed legislation. I now will have printed in the RECORD what is entitled:

> The Department of Defense Appeal, FY 2007 Defense Authorization Bill; Subject: Military Chaplains; Language/Provision: House section 590 established chaplains at each of the Military Services would have the prerogative to pray according to the dictates of their own conscience, except as must be limited by military necessity. The Senate included no similar provision.

The Department of Defense position is they oppose this provision. This reads as follows:

> This provision could marginalize chaplains who, in exercising their conscience, generate discomfort at mandatory formations. Such erosion of unit cohesion is avoided by the Military's present insistence on inclusive prayer at interfaith gatherings—something the House legislation would operate against.
>
> The Department urges exclusion of this provision.

We have not decided as yet. But that is another dimension to the diversity of thinking on this very important provision.

As all Members in this body fully appreciate and understand, when a matter of this controversy comes along you are often singled out by a variety of people who disagree. I have not taken a position, but nevertheless I am being besieged by telephone, by bloggers, by everything else—that I have taken this or that position. I will state momentarily what I think should be done. But I am very proud of my background.

I was blessed with two magnificent parents. We were active in the Episcopal Church, and I have remained active in that faith nearly all of my life, nearly 80 years now. My uncle was a rector of a very prominent parish here in Washington, DC, in the shadow of the Washington Cathedral where I was raised, not more than three blocks from his church, and I was a regular attendee of Sunday school through that. I am just sorrowful that people attack me personally, as if I had no religious foundation. I have that foundation.

I have had the privilege to serve in uniform. Not a career—and I have said it many times here on the floor of the Senate—of any great note, a very modest career, but as a young, 17, 18-year-old in the last year of World War II, just in the training command. We were trained to be replacements to go overseas to the Pacific. The war ended. We were sent home.

But many a time in the course of that period in military service, the second chapter, this time as a United States Marine, a young officer serving in Korea, the First Marine Air Wing, at a time when, indeed, certainly the infantry troops in the front lines, where I visited on occasion, were being subject to the most difficult combat under rigorous conditions in Korea, but I knelt and prayed many, many times with my fellow soldiers—men and women, fellow marines, fellow sailors.

So I speak as one who has benefited through the years from the religion that was instilled in me through my parents and the church of my choice, and it has given me a great strength to face up to the trials and tribulations that all of us experience in a lifetime.

I respect the chaplains. I went to chaplains on occasion, and I am grateful for the counseling that they gave me. So I say, I look back with a sense of humility on what the military has taught me. Many times have I said I don't think I would ever have achieved the opportunity to be a U.S. Senator had I not had the opportunity, the privilege of serving in uniform during the periods of two conflicts of our Nation and the learning that I received throughout the military. I have often said the military did more for me than I ever did for the military. But I just will stand my ground against anyone who wishes to challenge my religion.

Now, in my 28th year in this magnificent Chamber, many is the time I stood here as our Senate opens and listened to either our chaplain or a visiting clergy. Each of us have the privilege of inviting from our several States a visiting clergy to come and deliver a prayer. It is part of the life of the U.S. Senate. I know of no effort ever to try and censor or legislate the prayers given here in the Senate, either by our chaplain or by the many who come from all over America to give their prayers here. So I am not suggesting the military is like the Senate. But it is an example of the use of prayer.

The military is different. It is for that reason, that it is different, that I think it is important that we proceed to resolve such problems as may exist today in the military regarding how our chaplains pray, that we resolve that only after the institutions of the Senate and the House of Representatives go through a careful and deliberative process, not just try in the heat of resolving a conference report, in brief meetings here and there among just a very few—well, sometimes all the conferees, sometimes in small groups—trying to reconcile the differences between legislative provisions in the House bill and those in the Senate bill.

I would like to call our attention to the Constitution of the United States. It says:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

This is such a fundamental part of our democracy. It is a pillar of strength in this Republic. But it is constantly reviewed by the courts against the different factual situations that come up.

I think the military deserves no less than to have the most careful and deliberative review of this suggested language rather than to put it into law at this time. My recommendation—I will cooperate with the conferees—is that I am not prepared to take any position on how this language should be put into law or not put into law at this time. But I do say that I will strongly recommend to the Committee on Armed Services that the seriousness of this issue literally demands that as soon as the new Congress convenes in January, the committees of the Armed Services of the Senate and the House put on hearings at the earliest possibility. You could start with this language as recommended by the House of Representatives—the Senate has no language—to go through a process where people can come in.

For example, I asked each of the chiefs of the chaplains of the Army, Navy, and the Air Force to come in and speak to the conferees—there were only four conferees there at that time—which they did. I attached the utmost confidentiality as to what they said. But I was left with the impression that now is not the time to try to quickly put this one sentence into law by virtue of incorporating it into the final draft of the conference report. Those chaplains would be quite willing to come before the Congress in open session. Let the whole of the United States see this debate unfold, as it should.

Prayer is very important to the men and women of the Armed Forces. I remember so well the old maxim, ''There

is no atheist in the foxholes of war.'' Military people, military families are heavily dependent upon the comfort that is given by prayer—prayer alone or prayer with others.

I urge this Congress not to do at this time this one sentence. I will read it again. I have difficulty, as many times as I have read it, understanding exactly what it means.

It says: Each chaplain shall have the prerogative to pray according to the dictates of the chaplain's own conscience except as must be limited by military necessity.

What is that? What is military necessity? We should define that very carefully. I continue:

With any such limitation being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible.

That, to me, is a complicated sentence and a complicated message to put forth.

In conclusion, I will recommend to the conferees that at this time Congress not enact this bill language in the House, that we defer it to a time when the entire Senate and the entire House in open before the public invites in as many as we can possibly accommodate to give their views on the institution of the chaplain in the Armed Forces of the United States, an institution that I have known since the closing days of World War II and have known for over a half century and have seen it function and have seen it work. Before we change those rules, I think we owe no less to the men and women in the Armed Forces to have these deliberative bodies of the House and Senate have their hearings, debate the language, and then decide whether they wish or not to write language that in many respects we were admonished by the Founding Fathers to be careful, at least at the most under the First Amendment.

In addition, some of the concern—and I think it is a legitimate concern—of those proposing this language emanates from actions taken by the Department of the Air Force, the Department of the Navy, and I believe—I have not seen it—the Department of the Army in issuing certain guidance. The guidance was issued recently about this subject of prayer and other matters relating to the chaplain.

I will not go into it, but I will put in today's RECORD the documents that were issued by several military departments. You can read it for yourselves.

I think that we should put in report language in our bill two things: First, that the Secretary of Defense will stay—that means hold in abeyance—enforcement of these newly promulgated regulations until such time as the Congress has had an opportunity to hold its hearings, go through a deliberative process, and then decide whether it wishes to act by way of sending a conference report to the President for purposes of becoming the law of the land.

So it is twofold: let the system of the chaplain, which has been operating for my lifetime, half a century, serving the needs of the men and women of the Armed Forces, continue to do as they have done but stand down any regulations until studied by this coequal branch of the Government, which under the Constitution has a very special language provision that says we have a responsibility to care for the needs in general of the men and women of the Armed Forces. That is what the conference report does.

I am hopeful that the conferees will see the wisdom of this action, let this bill go forward to the President's desk so it can become law, and it can care for the men and women of the Armed Forces.

That will be written in report language. It does not have the force of law. But I am basically assured by the Department of Defense that they will comply; stay for the time being the most recent regulations, whatever they wish to call them, that have been sent out to their respective commands until Congress has had a reasonable time within which to decide whether they feel it is necessary to prepare for the President's signature a new law.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that additional materials regarding this subject be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1730.7C

d. Chaplains

(1) Chaplains are Qualified Religious Ministry Professionals (RMPs) endorsed by a Department of Defense (DOD)—listed Religious Organization (RO) and commissioned as CHC officers.

(2) As a condition of appointment, every RMP must be willing to function in a pluralistic environment in the military, where diverse religious traditions exist side-by-side with tolerance and respect. Every RMP must be willing to support directly and indirectly the free exercise of religion by all military members of the DON, their family members, and other persons authorized to be served, in cooperation with other chaplains and RMPs. Chaplains are trained to minister within the specialized demands of the military environment without compromising the tenets of their own religious tradition.

(3) In providing religious ministry, chaplains shall strive to avoid the establishment of religion to ensure that free exercise rights are protected for all authorized personnel.

(4) Chaplains will provide ministry to those of their own faith, facilitate ministry to those of other faiths, and care for all service members, including those who claim no religious faith. Chaplains shall respect the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs.

(5) Chaplains advise commands in matters of morale, morals, ethics, and spiritual well-being. They also serve as the principal advisors to commanders for all issues regarding the impact of religion on military operations.

(6) Chaplains are non-combatants. Chaplains are not authorized to obtain weapons qualifications, warfare qualifications, or bear arms; however, chaplains who attained weapons or warfare qualifications during prior service as a combatant are authorized to wear their awards and/or warfare qualifications. Chaplains are eligible to qualify for and to wear the insignia of qualification designations such as Fleet Marine Force, Basic Parachutist, and Navy/Marine Parachutist.

6. Responsibilities of Commanders

a. Commanders shall provide a Command Religious Program (CRP) in support of religious needs and preferences of the members of their commands, eligible family members and other authorized personnel. The CRP is supported with appropriated funds at a level consistent with other personnel programs within DON.

b. Chaplains will not be compelled to participate in religious activities inconsistent with their beliefs.

c. Commanders retain the responsibility to provide guidance for all command functions. In planning command functions, commanders shall determine whether a religious element is appropriate. In considering the appropriateness for including a religious element, commanders, with appropriate advice from a chaplain, should assess the setting and context of the function; the diversity of faith that may be represented among the participants; and whether the function is mandatory for all hands. Other than Divine/Religious Services, religious elements for a command function, absent extraordinary circumstances, should be non-sectarian in nature. Neither the participation of a chaplain, nor the inclusion of a religious element, in and of themselves, renders a command function a Divine Service or public worship. Once a commander determines a religious element is appropriate, the chaplain may choose to participate based on his or her faith constraints. If the chaplain chooses not to participate, he or she may do so with no adverse consequences. Anyone accepting a commander's invitation to provide religious elements at a command function is accountable for following the commander's guidance.

d. Commanders shall, when in a combat area, only assign, detail, or permit chaplains, as non-combatants under the Geneva Convention, to perform such duties as are related to religious ministry under Art. 1063 of reference (b).

e. Commanders shall not assign chaplains collateral duties that violate the religious practices of the chaplain's religious organization or that require services in a capacity in which the chaplain may later be called upon to reveal privileged or sensitive information.

f. Commanders shall not assign chaplains duties to act as director, solicitor, or treasurer of funds, other than administrator of a Religious Offering Fund; or serve on a court-martial; or stand watches other than that of duty chaplain.

U.S. ARMY

Army Chaplains & Military/Patriotic Ceremonial Prayer: How does the Army Chief of Chaplains address chaplains and Military/Patriotic Ceremonial Prayer?

AR 1651–1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army, has several pertinent statements. Paragraph. 1–4 a. reads, ''In, striking a balance between the 'establishment' and 'free exercise' clauses the Army chaplaincy, in providing religious services and ministries to the command, is an instrument of the U.S. Government to ensure that soldier's religious 'free exercise' rights are protected. At the same time, chaplains are trained to avoid even the appearance of any establishment of religion.'' Paragraph 4–4h. reads, ''Military and patriotic ceremonies may require a chaplain to provide an invocation, reading, prayer, or benediction. Such occasions are not to be considered religious

services. Chaplains will not be required to offer a prayer, if doing so would be in variance with the tenets or practices of their faith group.''

Chaplains provide prayer within worship services governed by the tenets of their faith. Chaplains also provide prayer in public ceremonies which are patriotic/military (sometimes called secular). The former are completely voluntary; the latter are often required functions at which all manner of people are present. It is at these non-worship ceremonies that the Chaplains must consider their obligations to assist every Soldier to pray.

There is no Army regulatory guidance prohibiting an individual from praying or directing an individual to pray in any specific manner. AR 165–1 is intended to strike a balance between a Chaplain's right to freely express his or her own personal religious beliefs and the Chaplain's duty to ensure that every Soldier is afforded his or her ''free exercise'' rights under the Constitution.

Pluralism and religious accommodation are trained throughout the Chaplain life cycle with the bulk of the subject matter conveyed in the foundation courses at the Chaplain Officer Basic Course. AR 165–1 is the reference for this training.

The Army Chief of Chaplains sees no reason to provide additional guidelines concerning Chaplains and public prayer since AR 165–1 is sufficient.

The Army Chief of Chaplains will not dictate how an Army Chaplain performs his or her prayer. Chaplains are trained and expected to use good judgment when addressing pluralistic audiences at public, non-worship ceremonies.

U.S. AIR FORCE

REVISED INTERIM GUIDELINES CONCERNING FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION IN THE AIR FORCE

We are sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. In taking our oath we pledge our personal commitment to the Constitution's protections for free exercise of religion and its prohibition against government establishment of religion.

We will remain officially neutral regarding religious beliefs, neither officially endorsing nor disapproving any faith belief or absence of belief. We will accommodate free exercise of religion and other personal beliefs, as well as freedom of expression, except as must be limited by compelling military necessity (with such limitations being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible). Commanders should ensure that requests for religious accommodation are welcomed and dealt with as fairly and consistently as practicable throughout their commands. They should be approved unless approval would have a real, not hypothetical, adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline. Avoidance of schedule conflicts between official activities and religious observances can enhance unit effectiveness and demonstrate mutual respect.

Chaplain service programs are the responsibility of commanders. Chaplains impartially advise commanders in regard to free exercise of religion, and implement programs of religious support and pastoral care to help commanders care for all their people, including opportunities for free exercise of individual beliefs. We will respect the rights of chaplains to adhere to the tenets of their religious faiths and they will not be required to participate in religious activities, including public prayer, inconsistent with their faiths.

Leaders at every level bear a special responsibility to ensure their words and actions cannot reasonably be construed to be officially endorsing nor disapproving any faith belief or absence of belief. In official circumstances or when superior/subordinate relationships are involved, superiors need to be sensitive to the potential that personal expressions may appear to be official, or have undue influence on their subordinates. Subject to these sensitivities, superiors enjoy the same free exercise rights as all other airmen.

Voluntary participation in worship, prayer, study, and discussion is integral to the free exercise of religion. Nothing in this guidance should be understood to limit the substance of voluntary discussions of religion, or the exercise of free speech, where it is reasonably clear that the discussions are personal, not official, and they can be reasonably free of the potential for, or appearance of, coercion.

Public prayer should not imply Government endorsement of religion and should not usually be a part of routine official business. Mutual respect and common sense should always be applied, including consideration of unusual circumstances and the needs of the command. Further, non-denominational, inclusive prayer or a moment of silence may be appropriate for military ceremonies or events of special importance when its primary purpose is not the advancement of religious beliefs. Military chaplains are trained in these matters.

General rules regarding use of Government computers apply to personal religious matters as they do for other personal matters. Chaplain programs will receive communications support as would comparable staff activities.

These guidelines are consistent with the responsibility of commanders to maintain good order and discipline, and are consistent with the core values of the Air Force: integrity first; service before self; and excellence in all we do.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On March 8, 2006, in Savannah, GA, David Bennett was attacked by five men outside a local gay bar. According to police, Sidney Swift, one of the alleged attackers, made several antigay remarks towards Bennett while in police custody. Swift's motivation for attacking Bennett was based solely on his sexual orientation.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

TRIBUTE TO BEN CHATER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in my 32 years as a U.S. Senator, I have met many extraordinary people. They have included Presidents, Kings and Nobel laureates, artists, soldiers, nurses, activists, and ordinary Americans who are doing any number of wonderful, selfless, and courageous things for their families, their communities, and their country. Some of these people chose careers in public service. Others were leading normal, uneventful lives when they were unexpectedly confronted with circumstances that caused them to become leaders. Many have simply lived inconspicuous lives caring for others. And then there are those who have struggled to overcome unfair and seemingly impossible hurdles and in doing so have shown a force of character and spirit that breaks barriers and inspires awe among everyone they meet.

Ben Chater, a Vermonter who interned in my office several years ago during the summer after his sophomore year at the University of California at Berkeley, is in the latter category. Born with cerebral palsy, Ben has faced obstacles from birth that the rest of us could not even imagine, much less overcome. He has done so with amazing grace, courage, and good humor, and his accomplishments are nothing short of awe inspiring. Ben's refusal to let his disability prevent him from taking on practically any challenge has been an example for me and my wife Marcelle, for my staff, and for virtually everyone who has come into contact with him.

I have little doubt that Ben will continue to set ambitious goals and in reaching them he will demonstrate even further the incredible capacity of the human spirit to overcome adversity. He will also continue to erase the stereotypes and misconceptions about the potential of people with disabilities.

Ben was recently the subject of an article in the Vermont Sunday Magazine by Tom Slayton, who is also the editor of Vermont Life, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD so others can be inspired by Ben's life and accomplishments.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Vermont Sunday Magazine, September 10, 2006].

''IN AWE OF BEN''—BEN CHATER, 23, WITH CEREBRAL PALSY, FINISHES BERKELEY, PREPARES FOR LIFE'S NEXT CHALLENGE

(By Tom Slayton)

This is the story of a fine mind living in a body that won't cooperate.

Ben Chater, 23, of Montpelier has had cerebral palsy since birth. Due to a difficult birth, Ben's brain was deprived of oxygen for a few moments. As a result, he has a major disability—he has limited control over movements of his limbs, or the rest of his body.

He requires assistance with everyday living—getting dressed in the morning, eating a meal, taking a shower. He speaks with some difficulty and requires a motorized wheelchair to get around.

However, Ben's mind is complete and undamaged. In fact, he is extremely bright.

He graduated this year, with honors, from the University of California at Berkeley with degrees in English and linguistics, the study of language—how it works, how sounds combine to make meaning, how the language we use shapes our thinking and our experience.

Linguistics is not for the faint of heart. Or mind. But Ben is neither.

For his work in that field, Ben received the Departmental Citation for Excellence in Linguistics, awarded by the faculty of the department to an outstanding student. He was the only student at Berkeley to receive that award this year.

Ben is not only an outstanding student; he is an outstanding person.

After talking with him for even a few minutes, one forgets the fact that he is in a powered chair and has some difficulty forming words. What remains is the lasting impression of an intelligent, positive, hopeful young man.

''I'm frankly in awe of Ben,'' says his mother, Maude Chater. ''There's a grace about him that I don't understand—nor do I need to.''

Maude and her husband, Mike, have worked long and hard to help Ben achieve an independent life. Perhaps the hardest thing for them to do, in recent years, has been to stand back and get out of Ben's way.

''It's very hard for families to resist their protective instincts,'' she notes quietly.

In addition to academic success that would be remarkable in a person with normal abilities, Ben has served as an intern in the office of U.S. Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, living in Washington while working for the senator. And he recently took—and aced—the LSAT exams—the qualifying exam for law school.

However, all that success does not eliminate the fact that he has difficulties the rest of us cannot imagine.

Recently, Ben went outside into the back yard to check on a blueberry patch, alone, while family members were out and about, as usual. He drove his motorized chair uphill toward some trees—and got mired in a soft spot in the yard.

Two hours later, when his mother arrived back home, she found Ben, still mired, still in his chair, stuck in front of one of the trees. When she went to assist him, Ben's only wry comment was:

''It's a nice tree . . . really!''

Early on—when Ben was a junior at Montpelier High School, to be exact—his special qualities became apparent to all of his classmates.

For Ben, as for most kids, it was a time of change, uncertainty and social stress. Many of the young people he had grown up with had begun to change their interests, and old friends drifted away and new ones didn't appear to take their places. More than most kids, Ben felt isolated.

Unlike most kids, though, he decided to do something about it. He received permission from the school administration to call a school-wide assembly, and at it he spoke to his fellow students about what he saw and felt. He spoke about what it was like to be Ben Chater, teenager, confused and lonely. ''I felt I needed to do something,'' Ben says, remembering the assembly.

What he discovered that day was that he was not alone. Many of his classmates and other students approached him afterward and said they felt exactly the same way—and they thanked him for putting their feelings into words along with his own.

''I don't know a single kid who loved every minute of high school,'' he says.

With his parents' backing and encouragement, he has always tried to join in the activities and share the interests of his peers. If a school field trip involved climbing a mountain, Ben's first thought was not: ''I can't go,'' but ''How can I climb the mountain, too?''

(Answer: ''We need to get a really strong guy to carry me up the mountain on his back.'' And that's the way it happened.)

But college presented a whole new set of challenges.

How could Ben get by without the assistance of his parents? (Answer: Hire and manage assistants. There are some Social Security funds for just that purpose.)

How could he do the immense amount of work that college typically demands? What about lengthy term papers, for example?

(Answer: The world of electronic communication—computers, e-mail, the Web, blogging and so on—has actually been very helpful to Ben. True, his hands and fingers won't obey his mental commands, but he makes expert use of a headset that enables him to type by tapping with a pointer attached to his head.

When ''translated'' into computer strokes and electronic impulses, Ben's words and ideas can be communicated freely. And the excellence of his ideas and scholarship stands out.)

How would Ben get to classes in a multistory building, meet with professors, register, even accomplish something as basic as going to the bathroom in a standard multistory academic building? (Answer: Attend a university that prides itself on integrating disabled students into all its classes and activities.)

After considerable research and a couple of visits, Ben decided to apply and was accepted at Berkeley, one of the nation's most competitive universities.

''Going to Berkeley expanded my horizons in just about every way imaginable,'' he says of the school, which is located across the bay from San Francisco.

As Ben explains the situation at Berkeley, he smiles and mentions the school's diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural student body.

''In most cities, 'diversity,' means there are a lot of different sections of town, each with its own different ethnicity or whatever,'' he said. ''But in Berkeley, everybody—all the different kinds of people—lives together. . . . And that creates a kind of social comfort I had never seen before.''

People in the Bay area—in California generally, according to Ben—prefer to make life easy and non-confrontational. They tend to be more accepting of different kinds of people because there are a lot of different kinds of people living close together. That means acceptance is the rule, not the exception.

''People with disabilities are just another element in that kind of melting pot,'' Ben said. ''There are a lot of folks in chairs out there—so it's easy to get around.''

And people with significant disabilities are more accepted, more worked into the everyday mix of society, he noted.

That doesn't mean that bad things, never happen.

Ben tells the story of the time he went into San Francisco to a concert. His plan was to meet friends in the city and go to the Fillmore, one of the city's main event venues. Then his friends would help him take the Bay Area Rapid Transit train back across the Bay to his apartment.

But things began to go wrong as soon as he reached San Francisco. He couldn't find his friends at all, and by the time the concert got out, he realized that he had to return home on his own.

Unfortunately, by the time he worked all that out, the BART trains had stopped for the night, so Ben had to go home by bus—a much longer and more circuitous route. He found his way to the Trans-Bay Bus terminal, and got a bus part-way home, to Oakland. It was late at night by then, and Ben had to wait in downtown Oakland for a bus to Berkeley.

The bus finally arrived and Ben drove his motorized chair onto the special lift that buses in the Bay area carry for passengers with disabilities. At that moment, the lift broke down.

And so at 3 a.m. Ben sat suspended over the street, waiting for 45 minutes for a mechanic to come and repair the lift.

Eventually the mechanic fixed the lift, the bus rolled out of the Oakland station, and Ben got home—as the sun was rising at about 5 a.m. He passed out in his chair and was later helped to bed by his roommate.

Such experiences have not cramped Ben's spirit. Now, with his degree in linguistics, a high score on the LSATs, and college behind him, he's taking a bit of a break, letting things settle, thinking about his next move.

There is an employment possibility at Berkeley that he's considering, but he's also visiting law schools—he and his father, Mike Chater, checked out Yale last week; and Ben would also like to visit Columbia and New York University. Eventually, he plans to apply to several law schools, choose one, and start next year. He's also thinking about traveling.

Like many young men and women his age, he also doesn't know precisely what career he wants to follow.

''The thought of being a lawyer . . . working in an office for the rest of my life is not all that exciting,'' he said. ''But going to law school gives you a lot of options—you can do a lot of things with a law degree.''

His dad, Ben notes, has counseled him to keep as many options open as he can.

Ben obviously has some things going for him. One is the steady, strong support of his parents.

''Our family was definitely oriented around Ben in his early years,'' Maude Chater says, ''When he got into high school, he directed us to back off a bit.''

Vacations and trips have occasionally been challenging. ''We travel, but we don't travel light,'' Maude quips.

Independence has been Maude and Mike's goal for Ben since his birth, and they realize that to foster independence in a person you have to let them be independent.

But there are moments—especially when Ben wants to take a significant step forward, like foreign travel or learning to drive—that can cause the mental brakes to go on in a parent's head. The difficulties Ben faces with daily living are probably at least as stressful on his parents as on Ben himself. But they have learned to stand back. They have learned to learn.

And they are regularly amazed by their son's courage.

For his part, Ben doesn't waste any time at all on self-pity. Not a moment.

''I've never spent a lot of time thinking about what life would be like if I weren't disabled,'' he said recently. ''I believe that everyone's dealt a set of cards, and it doesn't matter which cards you're dealt—it's how you play them.''

Interestingly, although he is well aware of the inequities that people with disabilities face in society, he said recently, ''There are a lot of things about our society that aren't right, and that aren't fair.''

But he said he doesn't want to spend his life worrying about that.

What he said he has learned, and is still learning, is that the more comfortable people can be with themselves, the more power they have over their lives—and by extension, the conditions around them.

Ben doesn't think of himself as a teacher, but he is one. Those who know him say he has taught them about the dignity and deep value inherent in every person, no matter

what their circumstances. At Berkeley, one of his nicknames was ''The Rabbi,'' because of the wise counsel he would offer his classmates, when asked.

He remains modest about his achievements, the long learning process he has come through and the long road that remains ahead. ''I'm definitely in the middle of a lengthy process of figuring out which end is up,'' he said. ''It's a process that everyone has to figure out for themselves.''

And what are his parents' hopes?

''Our hope for Ben is that he is able to live independently, support himself, and be happy,'' Maude says ''. . . that he finds his place in the world.''

DISASTER RECOVERY PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT

Mr. VITER. Mr. President, as the Senate author of the Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act of 2006 and a cosponsor of the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act, I believe we must work to support the ability of law-abiding citizens to defend and protect themselves and their families from criminal activity. It has been proven time and time again that prohibiting law-abiding citizens from owning a legal and constitutionally protected firearm does not reduce crime but, as this article which I will ask to have printed in the RECORD states, in fact, increases crime.

I ask unanimous consent that an article published in the August 7 issue of Legal Times entitled ''The Laws That Misfire: Banning guns doesn't work—in the District or anywhere else'' authored by Don B. Kates be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Legal Times, Aug. 7, 2006]

THE LAWS THAT MISFIRE

(By Don B. Kates)

The District of Columbia is now suffering from what its police chief on July 11 called a ''crime emergency.''

In 1976 the District banned handguns and required that all other guns be kept unloaded and disassembled, making them unavailable for self-defense. The result is that for 30 years, only lawbreakers have had guns readily available for use in the District.

Is that effective policy? Is it a sensible way to respond to a crime emergency? Those policy questions, in addition to purely legal issues, arise in pending litigation that brings a Second Amendment challenge against the District's gun bans.

I recently filed a Brandeis amicus brief supporting this constitutional challenge. My co-counsel were 12 other law professors, and the amici we represent include 16 American, Australian, and Canadian social scientists and medical school professors.

The case in question, Parker v. District of Columbia, is currently before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, after an unfavorable ruling in the District Court. The plaintiffs include a woman under a death threat for reporting neighborhood drug-dealing to police and a gay man who used his handgun to defend himself against a hate crime. This brief was filed pro bono, and the amici are not being paid.

What this amicus brief shows is significant, and the information it contains may surprise some. For the truth about gun bans is that they are policy failures even on their own terms: More guns don't mean more death, and fewer guns don't mean less death. Gun bans like the District's simply don't work.

BRITAIN'S FAILURE

Before the District adopted these policies in 1976, its murder rate was declining. Shortly after the District adopted the gun bans in an effort to reduce crime and violence, its murder rate became the highest of any large American city. It has remained the highest throughout the 30 years these policies have been in force (excepting the few years when the District ranked second or third).

To excuse this disastrous history, anti-gun advocates assert that gun bans covering only a single city are unenforceable.

True enough, but experience shows that gun bans covering an entire nation are also unenforceable In the United Kingdom, decades of severe gun control failed to stem steadily rising violent crime. So in 1997 the United Kingdom banned and confiscated all legally owned handguns. Yet by 2000 the United Kingdom had the highest violent-crime rate in the Western world—twice ours—and it still does today.

Gun bans are far from working even in a relatively small island nation, the report of England's National Crime Intelligence Service laments: Although ''Britain has some of the strictest gun laws in the world [i]t appears that anyone who wishes to obtain a firearm [illegally] will have little difficulty in doing so.''

American anti-gun advocates used to cite the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia as nations where low violence stemmed from severe gun restrictions. But in recent decades those nations' violent-crime rates have skyrocketed, first matching and now far surpassing ours.

In the 1990s those nations moved from severe controls to outright bans and confiscation of half a million guns. Today, Australia and Canada join the United Kingdom in having the highest violent-crime rates in the Western world—more than double ours.

MURDER RATES

For decades anti-gun advocates claimed that America, with the world's highest gun-ownership rate (true), had the highest murder rate (false).

In fact, the recently revealed Russian murder rate for the past 40 years has been consistently higher than the American rate. The Russian murder rate in the 1990s and 2000s has been almost four times higher than the U.S. rate. All this despite Russia's 70 years of banning handguns and strictly controlling long guns—laws that it enforced with police-state methods. Various European nations, including Luxembourg, also ban handguns but have much higher murder rates than the United States does.

Gun bans reflect a quasi-religious belief that more guns (particularly handguns) mean more violence and death, and, concomitantly, fewer guns mean fewer deaths.

This belief is quasi-religious because the believers cling fanatically to it despite scores of studies around the world finding no such correlation.

Consider the 2004 U.S. National Academy of Sciences evaluation: Having reviewed 253 journal articles, 99 books, 43 government publications, and some empirical research of its own, the academy could not identify any gun law that had reduced violent crime, suicide, or gun accidents.

American statistics on both the numbers of guns and murder rates are available from immediately after World War II to the present. In 1946, with about 48 million guns in the country, the U.S. murder rate was 6 per 100,000 people.

By 2000 the number of guns had increased fivefold (to more than 260 million), but the murder rate was almost identical (6.1). It remained there as of year-end 2004, despite the 12 million guns added to the American gun stock since 2000.

In the 60 years since World War II, U.S. murder rates dramatically increased and dramatically decreased—but not in relation to gun ownership, which increased substantially every year.

In the 1950s our murder rate held steady despite the addition of roughly 2 million guns per year. In the mid-'60s through the early '70s, the murder rate doubled, while 2.5 million to 3 million guns were added annually. In the late '70s, the murder rate held steady and then declined, even as 4 to 5 million more guns were added annually. Murder rates skyrocketed with the introduction of crack in the late '80s, but in the '90s they dramatically decreased, even as Americans bought 50 million more guns.

In sum, between 1974 and 2003, the number of guns doubled, but murder rates declined by one-third. So much for the quasi-religious faith that more guns mean more murder.

Multinational studies also discredit that faith. An American criminologist's comparison of homicide- and suicide-mortality data with gun-ownership levels for 36 nations (including the United States) for the period 1990–1955 showed ''no significant (at the 5% level) association between gun ownership and the total homicide rate.''

A somewhat later European study of data from 21 nations found ''no significant correlations [of gun-ownership levels] with total suicide or homicide rates.'' When you look at the data, guns aren't increasing murders.

WHO KILLS

The myth of more-guns-meaning-more-murder makes sense to people who think most murders involve ordinary people killing in moments of ungovernable rage because guns were available to them.

But ordinary people do not commit most murders, or many murders, or almost any murders. Almost all murderers are extreme aberrants with life histories of violence, psychopathology, substance abuse, and other crime.

Only about 15 percent of Americans have criminal records. But homicide studies reveal nearly all murderers have adult criminal records (often showing numerous arrests), have been diagnosed as psychotic, or have had restraining orders issued against them.

Obviously, such dangerous aberrants should not be allowed any instrument more deadly than a toothpick. Unfortunately, they disobey gun laws just as they disobey laws against violence. But law-abiding adults do not murder, guns or no guns, so there is little point is trying to disarm them.

DEFENDING THE INNOCENT

Worse, banning guns to the general public is not just useless but also counterproductive. Criminals prefer victims who are weaker than they are. The unique virtue of firearms is that they alone allow weaker people to resist predation by stronger, more violent ones.

A recent criminological evaluation states: ''Reliable, durable, and easy to operate, modern firearms are the most effective means of self-defense ever devised. They require minimal maintenance and, unlike knives and other weapons, do not depend on an individual's physical strength for their effectiveness. Only a gun can allow a 110 pound woman to defend herself against a 200 pound man.''

Research has shown guns are six times more often used by victims to repel criminals than by criminals committing crimes.

But Handgun Control Inc. tells victims not to resist rape or robbery in any way: ''The best defense against injury is to put up no defense—give them what they want or run.'' This anti-gun position, too, is bereft of criminological support. Twenty years of National Institute of Justice data show that victims who resist with guns are less likely to be injured, and much less likely to be raped or robbed, than victims who submit. Indeed, in more than 80 percent of cases where a victim pulls a gun, the criminal turns and flees whether he has a gun or not.

When speaking at universities here and abroad, I am often asked, ''Wouldn't it be a better world if there were no guns?''

I am a criminologist, not a theologian. If you want a world without guns and you think there is a God, pray for him to abolish guns. Human laws cannot disarm lawbreakers, but only the law-abiding.

Firearms are the only weaponry with which victims can reliably resist aggressors. In their absence, the ruthless and strong can oppress the weak.

Such oppression in the District is really the crime emergency. And as the District responds, it should take an unbiased look at the social-science data. It should rethink its gun bans now under legal challenge. And after 30 years of failed prohibition, it should now let its law-abiding citizens arm themselves for their own protection.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT FRANCIS McDERMOTT

• Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I would like to take this moment to honor a dear friend and dedicated community leader who passed away on August 28, 2006. GEN Robert McDermott leaves behind a legacy of distinguished service to his country and his community, and he will be dearly missed.

GEN Robert Francis McDermott was born on July 31, 1920, in Boston, MA, to Alphonsus and Anna McDermott. He graduated from the Boston Latin School in 1937 and continued his education at Norwich University. He received an appointment to the United States Military Academy in 1940 and was commissioned on January 19, 1943. In 1950, General McDermott earned an MBA degree from Harvard University.

On January 20, 1943, General McDermott married Alice Patricia McDermott at Trinity Chapel at West Point. Their marriage would last 47 years until Alice's death in 1990. Following their wedding, General McDermott was assigned to the 474th Fighter Bomber Group as its deputy group operations officer and flew 61 combat missions in a P–38 during World War II in the European Theatre. After the war, he remained in Europe on General Eisenhower's staff and later served in the Pentagon.

After teaching economics at West Point for 4 years, General McDermott was assigned to the newly established Air Force Academy as vice dean and professor of economics. In 1956, he was appointed Dean of Faculty, and in 1959, President Eisenhower appointed General McDermott the first Permanent Dean of Faculty and promoted him to brigadier general. At that time, he was the youngest flag-rank officer in all of the armed services. In recognition of General McDermott's contributions and innovations at the Air Force Academy, the Air Force named the cadet library for him and called him the ''Father of Modern Military Education.'' He retired from the Air Force in 1968.

General McDermott joined USAA—United Services Automobile Association—as executive vice president, and became its president in January 1969. Throughout his career, McDermott's philosophy was to nurture the employees and to promote their personal and professional growth treating them and USAA's customers by the Golden Rule. His efforts bore success. In 1993, USAA was ranked No. 1 in ''The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America.'' General McDermott retired as chairman and CEO of USAA in 1993.

On August 6, 1994, General McDermott married Marion Slemon of Colorado Springs. They enjoyed his retirement in San Antonio and Colorado Springs, but General McDermott did not slow down. He was active in the San Antonio community with business and charitable organizations, enjoyed traveling to visit family and friends, and continued playing golf and his trombone.

As a dedicated and enthusiastic advocate for San Antonio, General McDermott worked tirelessly to advance economic development in the area. In 1974, he was elected chairman of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and promoted San Antonio as a center for domestic and international growth. He also founded the Economic Development Foundation and was a cofounder of United San Antonio. In the 1980s, General McDermott focused on the development of biotechnology in San Antonio to provide the city with a viable economic sector for the 21st century. In 1984, he founded the Texas Research and Technology Foundation which began development of the Texas Research Park—TRP—the core of biotechnology for San Antonio. In the early 1990s, General McDermott also led a group of local investors to buy the San Antonio Spurs to assure it would stay in San Antonio. To coach the Spurs, he selected Air Force Academy graduate Gregg Popovich who led the team to win three NBA championships.

For General McDermott's wide-ranging efforts on behalf of San Antonio, the city of San Antonio named a section of Interstate Highway 10 West as the ''Robert F. McDermott Freeway.'' He also received recognition for his business and educational activities, including an elementary school named for him, induction into the Texas Business Hall of Fame in 1987 and the American National Business Hall of Fame in 1989; the recipient of the Distinguished Graduate Award from West Point in 1993; the recipient of Harvard Business School's Alumni Achievement Award in 1998; and most recently, the University of the Incarnate Word established the Robert F. McDermott Professorship in Organizational Leadership this year.

Today I honor the passing of a great family man, a terrific friend, and an outstanding community leader.•

NATIONAL MINE RESCUE COMPETITION

• Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I am pleased today to report some good news with regard to mine safety and to congratulate FMC Corporation's White Team for being the best mine rescue team in the Nation. As we all know, the mining community experienced a profound loss this year with the disasters at the Sago and Aracoma coal mines in West Virginia and at the Darby Mine in Kentucky. The tragic loss of life in these accidents served to reaffirm the commitment of all those involved in the industry to ensuring and improving the safety and welfare of our Nation's miners.

Essential to that effort, and emblematic of our commitment, was the passage of the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response, MINER, Act of 2006. The MINER Act passed this body unanimously. It was then signed into law by President Bush and implemented by the Mine Safety and Health Administration, MSHA.

As the primary sponsor of the MINER Act, I am confident that this new law will improve the safety of our underground mines and reduce the likelihood of similar tragic accidents in the future. In the careful and deliberate process of developing the MINER Act, the views of all stakeholders were solicited and carefully considered. Although in many areas there were differences of opinion, all those involved in the issue of mine safety were in agreement on the critical role played by mine rescue teams and universal in their praise of the dedicated individuals who serve on them.

Rescue teams represent the very finest traditions of the mining community. Composed of volunteers, highly trained and experienced, these teams stand ready to come to the aid of their fellow miners in the most critical and dangerous of situations. The MINER Act explicitly recognizes the essential role of mine rescue teams and the importance of their training and support.

Part of the training and the tradition of mine rescue teams is their participation in competitions that pit the teams against each another. Each year MSHA holds a national mine rescue competition that draws teams from throughout the United States. This year, the metal, nonmetal mine competition was held in Reno, NV. I am particularly pleased to report four teams from southwestern Wyoming placed in the top six spots in a field of 34 teams from across the Nation.

The FMC Corporation White Team, which was led by Leroy Hutchinson, won the competition. The White Team

was followed by the FMC Red Team, led by Bob Knot. OCI Chemical's Blue Team, which was led by Gary Ruiz, placed fifth, and Solvay's Silver Team, which was led by Shawn Marshall, placed sixth.

These teams represent the best of southwest Wyoming's soda ash industry. The four companies that mine the mineral Trona in Wyoming account for 90 percent of the U.S. production of soda ash. Soda ash is a commodity required for the production of glass. It is also a very important export that accounts for $500 million of our balance of trade.

I am very proud of this year's showing by our Wyoming soda ash industry in this competition. It is important to remember that although this is a competition, it is not a sport. The National Mine Safety Rescue Contest and other mine safety rescue contests are training events. They help prepare mine rescue teams so they are ready to act if they are ever called to deal with a situation that we hope will never occur.

When accidents happen, miners count on volunteer mine rescue teams to save them. Those mine rescue teams need to have the best resources available to them and the training they will need to be prepared for anything that may happen as they take on that important job. Mine rescue competitions play an important role in that effort by providing mine rescue teams with the kind of experience they will need if they are to perform at the highest level of efficiency in the event there is an emergency. They offer a chance for teams to improve their communication skills, to consider previously unforeseen problems, and to get feedback on their performance from contest judges.

Although these teams compete against each other in mine rescue contests, when a real world situation arises, they operate as one cohesive unit to affect a rescue. Each company can draw on the good will and collective expertise of the mine rescue teams to help bring miners in danger to safety. In the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation, the teams know that if there is a mine emergency, they will have the support they will need to bring the victims of the accident and their fellow rescue workers out of the mine and home to their families and loved ones.

In other words, while these companies compete in the marketplace and mine rescue teams compete in these contests, they will stand shoulder to shoulder should an accident occur at the mine.

I would like to include the names of each of the participants of our teams in southwest Wyoming who competed in the national mine rescue competition. Although I particularly want to congratulate the FMC White Team, the FMC Red Team, OCI Chemical's Blue Team, and Solvay's Silver Team, I congratulate and thank all those who participated. Your efforts continue to make a difference by making our mines a safer place for all our Nation's miners to work.

The information follows.

FMC White Team: Leroy Hutchinson (Captain) (Benchman), Tony Herrera, Alan Jones (Gas), Robert Byers, Brad Roll, Bronson Berg, Vern Plantenberg, Mike Padilla (Team Trainer).

FMC White First Aid: Robert Byers, Bronson Berg, Vern Plantenberg.

FMC Red Team: Bob Knott (Captain), Mark Anderson, Rick Owens (Gas), Robert Pope, Bill Madura, Daniel Hellickson, Rod Knight (Benchman), Mike Padilla (Team Trainer), Dave Hutchinson (Team Trainer), Rick Steenberg (Official in Charge), Robert Pope, Mark Anderson, Bill Madura.

FMC Red First Aid: Robert Pope, Mark Anderson, Bill Madura.

General Chemical Blue: Jeff Downey (Captain), Doug Cox (Gas), Steve McKeehan, Mickey Smith, Willie Cederburg, Stan Owens, Terry Hansen, Leslie Wareham (Benchman), Keith Mullins (Team Trainer), David Graham (Official in Charge), Mickey Smith, Terry Hansen, Steve McKeehan.

General Chemical Blue First Aid: Mickey Smith, Terry Hansen, Steve McKeehan.

General Chemical Black: Alan Brewer (Captain), Byron Willingham, Lucas Coon (Gas), Curtiss Cooley, Jr., Steve Roberts, Tommy Graham, Ken Ball, Charles Beard (Benchman), John E. Sykes (Team Trainer), David Graham (Official in Charge), Steve McKeehan.

General Chemical Black First Aid: Byron Willingham, Steve Roberts, Curtiss Cooley, Jr.

OCI White Team: Jack J. Volsey II (Captain), Chuck Jones, Paul Larson (Gas), Ted Laughlin, Scott Counts, Kyle Butcher, Willy Moore (Benchman), Nathan Kendall, Matt Cummings (Team Trainer), Rick Terry (Team Trainer), Tim Musbach (Official in Charge).

OCI White First Aid: Chuck Jones, Ted Laughlin, Nathan Kendall.

OCI Blue Team: Gary Ruiz (Captain), Bill Mehle (Gas), Brent Skorcz, Blake Barney, Dennie Hughes (Benchman), Don O'Lexey, Richard Clark, Tyler Lovato, Rick Terry (Team Trainer), Matt Cummings (Team Trainer), Tim Musbach (Official in Charge).

OCI Blue First Aid: Blake Barney, Don O'Lexey, Dennie Hughes.

Solvay Silver Team: Shawn Marshall (Captain), Joe Thompson, Bob Clement, Scott Brown (Benchman), Gerald Maxfield (Gas), Brian Liscomb, Ryan Hansen, Dusty Martin, Jeff Tetmore (Team Trainer), John Angwin (Official in Charge).

Solvay Silver First Aid Team: Shawn Marshall, Joe Thompson, Dusty Martin.

Solvay Blue Team: Joe McDonald (Captain), Chad Rawlins (Gas), Kent Boman, Jamie McGillis, Jerry Huntington, Brian Quick, Jody Burgener, Dennis Hughes (Benchman), David Stevenson (Team Trainer), John Angwin (Official in Charge).

Solvay Blue First Aid Team: Joe McDonald, Kent Boman, Jamie McGillis.●

CREATIVE PLANTERS GARDEN CLUB

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I acknowledge the Creative Planters Garden Club of Louisiana. After the catastrophic destruction of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, this organization has dedicated itself to rebuilding the horticulture in Louisiana, and I would like to take a few moments to highlight their efforts.

Unfortunately, like many other citizens in south Louisiana, several members of this organization lost their homes to the hurricanes that ravished our State in 2005. While many members of the Creative Planters Garden Club are rebuilding their livelihoods, they are also volunteering their time to rebuild their State. Their priorities include replacing landscape projects devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and replanting the rose garden in New Orleans Botanical Gardens in City Park. It is community involvement like this that enriches our State.

For more than 23 years the Creative Planters Garden Club has worked to enhance Louisiana communities by promoting civic stewardship and horticulture education. They have worked in conjunction with many State and local government agencies to teach and encourage gardening to children.

I applaud the members of the Creative Planters Garden Club of Louisiana for their continued service to the citizens of their community.●

REAR ADMIRAL MICHAEL K. LOOSE

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize and honor Rear Admiral Michael K. Loose for his exceptional achievement as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers, from October 2003 to October 2006.

As Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, NAVFAC, Rear Admiral Loose led 17,000 civilian and military employees, executing an annual workload of $10.6 billion supporting global contingency engineering operations, the Navy shore infrastructure, and systems command engineering and acquisition support. As the chief of civil engineers, he led Active and Reserve components of the Civil Engineer Corps community of over 2,000 officers and the enlisted Seabee community of over 20,000 sailors that jointly serve as the Navy's contingency and facilities engineering experts and comprise the Naval Construction Force of 22 battalions, 4 regiments, and other supporting units.

Upon assuming command of NAVFAC, Rear Admiral Loose quickly developed an overarching strategic plan that incorporated Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Chief of Naval Operations guiding principles. Building on this foundational document, and acutely focused on the critical imperative to dramatically reduce costs to support Sea Enterprise fleet recapitalization, improve service to joint/fleet operational commands, and align and single-up accountability, Rear Admiral Loose boldly conceptualized and implemented a dramatic restructuring and transformation of all components of NAVFAC—the most comprehensive and fundamental reorganization of the command since the Navy revamped the Bureau system more than three decades ago. As a direct result of his initiative and vision,

over $600 million in savings were harvested and redirected to the fleet starting in the Program Objective Memoranda for fiscal year 2006. Overall, Rear Admiral Loose increased production productivity by 13 percent while reducing the required workforce by 1,100 civilian positions. Key elements of the transformation that enabled these efficiencies included dramatically consolidating and fully aligning NAVFAC field commands with Navy regional commanders. This structural realignment combined Navy public works centers focused on maintenance, transportation, and utilities services with engineering field divisions focused on planning, environmental, design, and construction services to establish a single, aligned, and vastly streamlined organization—a Regional Facilities Engineering Command. He also developed and executed strategic partnership agreements with Commander, Navy Installations Command and Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps—Installations—and Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command, to enable lowest facility lifecycle business analysis and management by leveraging the transformed NAVFAC organization. With the establishment of the single, aligned Facilities Engineering Command in each Navy region, Rear Admiral Loose operationalized NAVFAC, creating a command culture of accountability, technical competency, and responsiveness to fleet mission demands and surge requirements.

Rear Admiral Loose also aggressively supported the newly established Naval Expeditionary Combat Command/Naval Expeditionary Combat Enterprise as Systems Command Commander and first chief operating officer. He developed a $400 million program to replace overage and expended equipment, weapons, personal protective gear, and materials supporting the Naval Construction Force extended operations in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom. Rear Admiral Loose guided the largest mobilization since Vietnam of Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps Officers, enabling outstanding mission support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

Clearly, Rear Admiral Loose's comprehensive knowledge of the Navy, keen judgment, and unwavering commitment to the sailor, the Navy family, and the fleet have made him an asset to the Navy. I am proud that he is my fellow New Mexican and my fellow American, and I am pleased to recognize and thank Rear Admiral Loose for his tenure as Commander, NAVFAC and Chief of Civil Engineers.

Today I honor Rear Admiral Loose for his service to our country, his inspirational moral courage, his exceptional strategic vision, and his relentlessly bold leadership. He and his wife Carol have made many sacrifices during his career in the Navy, and I call upon my colleagues and join his family, friends, and associates to wish them ''fair winds and following seas'' as they embark on yet another great Navy adventure and continue their dedicated and outstanding service to this grateful Nation.●

HONORING SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I honor South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks for being awarded the 2006 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is 1 of only 15 employers nationwide to be honored with this prestigious award. The support, encouragement, and flexibility they provide to their employees who are called to serve their country with the South Dakota National Guard illustrates that they are truly deserving of this high honor. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks serves as a fine example of South Dakotans coming together to support the cause of freedom around the world. They are going the extra mile to accommodate our service men and women and thus ensure a safer, more secure America.

Today I together with the entire State of South Dakota, commend South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks for their commitment to serving our State and our Armed Forces.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–8329. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pantoea Agglomerans Strain E325; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 8091–6) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8330. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Metrafenone; Pesticide Tolerance'' (FRL No. 8093–7) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8331. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Dithianon; Pesticide Tolerance'' (FRL No. 8090–5) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8332. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Etofenprox; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions'' (FRL No. 8089–2) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8333. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Joseph L. Yakovac, Jr., United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–8334. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the budget models used for base operations support, sustainment, and facilities recapitalization; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–8335. A communication from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the operation of the premerger notification program and the Commission's and the Antitrust Division's merger enforcement activities during Fiscal Year 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8336. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Regulations (including 2 regulations beginning with CGD05–06–087)'' (RIN1625–AA09) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8337. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Jamaica Bay and Connecting Waterways, New York City, NY (CGD01–06–006)'' (RIN1625–AA09) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8338. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zones (including 2 regulations beginning with CGD05–06–062)'' (RIN1625–AA00) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8339. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulations (including 2 regulations beginning with CGD05–06–069)'' (RIN1625–AA08) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8340. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zones (including 11 regulations beginning with CGD05–06–059)'' (RIN1625–AA00) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8341. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report on the administration of the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8342. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin'' (FRL No. 8217–8) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8343. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting,

pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Control of Air Pollution from New Motor Vehicles; Second Amendment to the Tier 2/Gasoline Sulfur Regulations'' (FRL No. 8221–2) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8344. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Methods for Measurement of Visible Emissions'' (FRL No. 8221–4) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8345. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Preliminary Assessment Information Reporting Rule and Health and Safety Data Reporting Rule; Revision of Effective Dates'' (FRL No. 8094–8) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8346. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Weighted Average Interest Rate Update'' (Notice 2006–80) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8347. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Election Under Section 355(b)(3)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code'' (Notice 2006–81) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8348. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Certain Cost-Sharing Payments; Conservation Security Program'' (Notice 2006–46) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8349. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Railroad Track Maintenance Credit'' (RIN1545–BE91) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8350. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Replacement Period for Livestock Sold on Account of Drought'' (Notice 2006–82) received on September 15, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8351. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $100,000,000 or more to Japan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8352. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $50,000,000 or more to French Guiana; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8353. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed license agreement for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $50,000,000 or more to Kazakhstan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8354. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $50,000,000 or more to Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8355. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $100,000,000 or more to Japan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8356. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad for the United Kingdom; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8357. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under contract in the amount of $100,000,000 or more to Canada; to the Committee on Foreign Relations

EC–8358. A communication from the Agency Tender Official, Installation Services, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, two letters for Congressional notification purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–8359. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's efforts in the area of transportation security; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8360. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Auditor's Examination of McKinley Technology High School Modernization Project''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8361. A communication from the Chairman, Office of General Counsel, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Increase in Limitation on Authorized Committees Supporting Other Authorized Committees'' (Notice 2006–17) received on September 14, 2006; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–8362. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, Department of Veterans, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the commercial activities which are currently being performed by Federal employees for calendar year 2005; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–8363. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((Docket No. FEMA–7937)(71 FR 45424)) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–8364. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–8365. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Rule: Alaska Native Veterans Allotments'' (RIN1004–AD60) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–8366. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the program to be initiated for Cuba by the Agency's Office of Transition Initiatives; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–8367. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Brucellosis in Cattle; State and Area Classifications; Wyoming'' (Docket No. APHIS–2006–0138) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition , and Forestry.

EC–8368. A communication from the Director, Office of Energy Policy and New Uses, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Office of Energy Policy and New Uses; Designation of Biobased Items for Federal Procurement'' (RIN0503–AA26) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8369. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a proposed amendment to the Rural Electrification Act of 1936; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8370. A communication from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Food Additives Permitted for Direct Addition to Food for Human Consumption; Bacteriophage Preparation'' (Docket No. 2002F–0316) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–8371. A communication from the Chairman, National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, transmitting, a report relative to the Commission's review of the draft proposal for the consolidation of the Commission into the Institute for Museum and Library Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–8372. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''5 CFR Parts 1630, Privacy Act Regulations, 1651, Death Benefits, 1653, Court Orders and Legal Processes Affecting Thrift Savings Plan Accounts, and 1690, Thrift Savings Plan'' (CFR Parts 1630, 1651, 1653, 1690) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8373. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Auditor's Examination of the Escrow Account Established by Accenture and the Office of Tax

and Revenue (OTR) in Connection with Contract # 99–C–004''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8374. A communication from the Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Commission's follow up work to its 2005 report entitled ''Report to the Congress: Physician-owned Specialty Hospitals''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8375. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting, a report relative to copies of prospectuses that support the Administration's fiscal year 2007 Capital Investment and Leasing Program; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8376. A communication from the Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Arts Endowment's inventory of commercial activities performed by federal employees and inventory of inherently governmental activities for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8377. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; 'Other Rockfish' in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (I.D. No. 072806D) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8378. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Closure of Tilefish Permit Category B (Full-Time Tier 2) to Directed Tilefish Fishing'' (I.D. No. 073106E) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8379. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (I.D. No. 073106A) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8380. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line or Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (I.D. No. 073106B) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8381. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands'' (I.D. No. 081506A) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8382. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (I.D. No. 081406C) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8383. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Services, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Framework 43 to the Northeast Multispecies Fisheries Management Plan'' (RIN0648–AU33) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8384. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Services, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of a Final Rule Regulatory Amendment to Amend Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program Cost Recovery Regulations'' (RIN0648–AT43) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8385. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation in the Export Administration Regulations of the United States' Rescission of Libya's Designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism and Revisions Applicable to Iraq'' (RIN0694–AD81) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8386. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''December 2005 Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary Agreement Implementation: Categories 1, 2, 3, 5 Part I (telecommunications), 5 Part II (Information Security), 6, 8, and 9 of the Commerce Control List; Wassenaar Reporting Requirements; Definitions; and Certain New or Expanded Export Controls'' (RIN0694–AD73) received on September 18, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8387. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Annual Report of the Maritime Administration for fiscal year 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8388. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary for Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's intention to impose new foreign-policy based export controls; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8389. A communication from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Board's 2006 Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act inventory; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2010. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to enhance the Social Security of the Nation by ensuring adequate public-private infrastructure and to resolve to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 109–337).

By Mr. ENZI, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 3570. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2007 through 2011, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. STEVENS for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Kevin J. Martin, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2006.

*John M. R. Kneuer, of New Jersey, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Capt. Thomas F. Atkin and ending with Capt. Paul F. Zukunft, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on September 7, 2006.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the RECORD on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Coast Guard nomination of Tina J. Urban to be Lieutenant.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SPECTER):

S. 3910. A bill to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to accept the donation of a bust depicting Sojourner Truth and to display the bust in a suitable location in the Capitol; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. FRIST):

S. 3911. A bill to amend the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to revise the requirements for labeling of certain wool and cashmere products; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ENSIGN (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. TALENT):

S. 3912. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the exceptions process with respect to caps on payments for therapy services under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 3913. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to eliminate funding shortfalls for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for fiscal year 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BURNS (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. Res. 572. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to raising awareness and enhancing the state of computer security in the United States, and supporting the goals and ideals of National Cyber Security Awareness Month; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. Res. 573. A resolution calling on the United States Government and the international community to support the successful transition from conflict to sustainable peace in Uganda; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. DOLE):

S. Res. 574. A resolution recognizing the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation on the occasion of its 70th anniversary and saluting the outstanding service of its members and staff on behalf of the agricultural community and the people of North Carolina; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 119

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 119, a bill to provide for the protection of unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes.

S. 155

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 155, a bill to increase and enhance law enforcement resources committed to investigation and prosecution of violent gangs, to deter and punish violent gang crime, to protect law-abiding citizens and communities from violent criminals, to revise and enhance criminal penalties for violent crimes, to reform and facilitate prosecution of juvenile gang members who commit violent crimes, to expand and improve gang prevention programs, and for other purposes.

S. 772

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 772, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand workplace health incentives by equalizing the tax consequences of employee athletic facility use.

S. 1035

At the request of Mr. FRIST, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1035, a bill to authorize the presentation of commemorative medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th century in recognition of the service of those Native Americans to the United States.

S. 1057

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1057, a bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to revise and extend that Act.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1174, a bill to authorize the President to posthumously award a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Robert M. LaFollette, Sr., in recognition of his important contributions to the Progressive movement, the State of Wisconsin, and the United States.

S. 1278

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1278, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide a mechanism for United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to sponsor their permanent partners for residence in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1507

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to protect children from Internet pornography and support law enforcement and other efforts to combat Internet and pornography-related crimes against children.

S. 1687

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1687, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide waivers relating to grants for preventive health measures with respect to breast and cervical cancers.

S. 2250

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2250, a bill to award a congressional gold medal to Dr. Norman E. Borlaug.

S. 2453

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 2453, a bill to establish procedures for the review of electronic surveillance programs.

S. 3393

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3393, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain boys' water resistant pants.

S. 3394

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3394, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain men's water resistant pants.

S. 3396

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3396, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain girls' water resistant pants.

S. 3397

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3397, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain women's and girls' water resistant pants.

S. 3400

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3400, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain men's and boys' water resistant pants.

S. 3401

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3401, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain women's water resistant pants.

S. 3402

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3402, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain girls' water resistant pants.

S. 3403

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3403, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain women's water resistant pants.

S. 3475

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3475, a bill to provide housing assistance for very low-income veterans.

S. 3493

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3493, a bill to provide that quantitative restrictions shall not apply with respect to certain knit performance outerwear pants.

S. 3494

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3494, a bill to provide that quantitative restrictions shall not apply with respect to woven performance outerwear pants.

S. 3651

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3651, a bill to reduce child marriage, and for other purposes.

S. 3738

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3738, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional standard deduction for real property taxes for nonitemizers.

S. 3744

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3744, a bill to establish the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Program.

S. 3771

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) were added as cosponsors of S. 3771, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide additional authorizations of appropriations for the health centers program under section 330 of such Act.

S. 3808

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3808, a bill to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.

S. 3880

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3880, a bill to provide the Department of Justice the necessary authority to apprehend, prosecute, and convict individuals committing animal enterprise terror.

S. 3885

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3885, a bill to amend Public Law 98-513 to provide for the inheritance of small fractional interests within the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation.

S. 3887

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) were added as cosponsors of S. 3887, a bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from using private debt collection companies, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 97

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 97, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SPECTER):

S. 3910. A bill to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to accept the donation of a bust depicting Sojourner Truth and to display the bust in a suitable location in the Capitol; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President it gives me pride and pleasure to introduce revised legislation that will enable the Joint Committee on the Library to display a bust depicting Sojourner Truth in the Capitol Building.

I began this effort with legislation I introduced 2 years ago during the 108th Congress. Because my colleagues in the other body and I were not able to enact our bill that time, we return in the 109th Congress with new legislation which would direct the Joint Committee on the Library to accept the donation of a bust depicting Sojourner Truth and to display the bust in a suitable location in the Capitol. I now lay down this version of the bill that reflects bipartisan support among leaders who share the goal of honoring this important figure in our Nation's and New York State's history.

Sojourner Truth was born into slavery in New York's Hudson Valley in 1797, She moved to New York City after gaining her freedom in 1826 and by 1843 had changed her name to Sojourner Truth, traveling the country preaching for human rights. After attending the 1850 National Woman's Rights Convention, Truth made women's suffrage a focal point of her speeches, portraying women as powerful, independent figures. Her most famous speech, ''Ain't I a Woman,'' given at the 1851 Women's Rights Convention in Akron, OH, has become a classic text on women's rights.

Because of her great, advocacy on behalf of women, despite all of the hardships she faced, Sojourner Truth deserves to be represented along with the suffragists depicted in the United States Capitol Building. I ask that the Senate come together and honor this visionary American for her service to our Nation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. FRIST):

S. 3911. A bill to amend the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to revise the requirements for labeling of certain wool and cashmere products; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3911

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act''.

SEC. 2. LABELING OF WOOL AND CASHMERE PRODUCTS TO FACILITATE COMPLIANCE AND PROTECT CONSUMERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(a) of the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 (15 U.S.C. 68b(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(5)(A) In the case of a wool product stamped, tagged, labeled, or otherwise identified as—

''(i) 'Super 80's' or '80's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 19.75 microns or finer;

''(ii) 'Super 90's' or '90's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 19.25 microns or finer;

''(iii) 'Super 100's' or '100's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 18.75 microns or finer;

''(iv) 'Super 110's' or '110's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 18.25 microns or finer;

''(v) 'Super 120's' or '120's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 17.75 microns or finer;

''(vi) 'Super 130's' or '130's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 17.25 microns or finer;

''(vii) 'Super 140's' or '140's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 16.75 microns or finer;

''(viii) 'Super 150's' or '150's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 16.25 microns or finer;

''(ix) 'Super 160's' or '160's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 15.75 microns or finer;

''(x) 'Super 170's' or '170's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 15.25 microns or finer;

''(xi) 'Super 180's' or '180's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 14.75 microns or finer;

''(xii) 'Super 190's' or '190's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 14.25 microns or finer;

''(xiii) 'Super 200's' or '200's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 13.75 microns or finer;

''(xiv) 'Super 210's' or '210's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 13.25 microns or finer;

''(xv) 'Super 220's' or '220's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 12.75 microns or finer;

''(xvi) 'Super 230's' or '230's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 12.25 microns or finer;

''(xvii) 'Super 240's' or '240's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 11.75 microns or finer; and

''(xviii) 'Super 250's' or '250's', if the average diameter of wool fiber of such wool product does not average 11.25 microns or finer.

''(B) In each case described in subparagraph (A), the average fiber diameter of the wool product may be subject to such other standards or deviations as adopted by regulation by the Commission.

''(6)(A) In the case of a wool product stamped, tagged, labeled, or otherwise identified as cashmere, if—

''(i) such wool product is not the fine (dehaired) undercoat fibers produced by a cashmere goat (capra hircus laniger);

''(ii) the average diameter of the fiber of such wool product exceeds 19 microns; or

''(iii) such wool product contains more than 3 percent (by weight) of cashmere fibers

with average diameters that exceed 30 microns.

''(B) The average fiber diameter for each product described in subparagraph (A) may be subject to a coefficient of variation around the mean that does not exceed 24 percent.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY DATE.—The amendments made by this section apply to wool products manufactured on or after January 1, 2007.

By Mr. ENSIGN (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. TALENT):

S. 3912. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the exceptions process with respect to caps on payments for therapy services under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ENSIGN. I am pleased to introduce the Securing Effective and Necessary Individual Outpatient Rehabilitation Services Act, the SENIORS Act, to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries who rely on medically necessary therapy services continue to have access to the services they need. The bill would allow exceptions to therapy caps for certain medically necessary services in 2007.

An exceptions process for Medicare patients who exceed the therapy cap was authorized in legislation last year. A Medicare patient may now obtain an exception if the service is deemed medically necessary and then receive covered therapy services above the cap. The exceptions process expires at the end of this year, so Congress must extend it for the 2007 calendar year.

I started the fight to eliminate the annual cap on outpatient rehabilitation services in its entirety when I was in the House of Representatives. I brought this fight to the Senate where I introduced legislation to completely repeal the annual Medicare cap on rehabilitation therapy services. I recognize that a complete repeal is not politically or financially viable at this time. However, an extension of the exceptions process should be possible.

Action is needed to address the therapy caps this year. This is not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue. At its heart, this issue is a patient issue. Forty-four of my Senate colleagues have joined me in legislation to repeal the therapy caps once and for all. In addition, almost 260 of members of the United States House of Representatives and more than 40 groups representing patients and providers support legislation efforts to repeal the caps or extend the current exceptions process. And, in May of this year, 47 Senators signed a letter to Senate leadership urging an extension of the exceptions process authorized in the Deficit Reduction Act beyond its current expiration of January 1, 2007.

Ensuring access to needed outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathology services for Medicare beneficiaries in a fiscally responsible manner is essential. Denying access by an arbitrary cap will only shift costs as patients will delay rehabilitation, seek more costly interventions, or be admitted inpatient settings.

As a member of th1e Senate Budget Committee, I realize the serious budgetary constraints that are upon Congress. I also understand that we need to prioritize spending. I believe that extension of the exceptions process beyond 2006 should be a priority. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that senior citizens continue to have access to high-quality rehabilitation services.

BY Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 3913. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to eliminate funding shortfalls for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for fiscal year 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to protect the vital health insurance coverage that millions of our Nation's children receive through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). As I stand here today, at least 17 States face looming Federal funding shortfalls of as much as $900 million, the cost of covering more than half a million children.

Mr. DINGELL, the distinguished ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and I have worked for several weeks to craft a bill that reflects the intentions of this program when it was first created nearly ten years ago: to provide comprehensive health insurance coverage for children. Additionally, this legislation addresses an ongoing set of challenges associated with the program's block grant financing structure. I am pleased to report that Mr. DINGELL and others will be introducing companion legislation in the House of Representatives today.

We are introducing the Keep Children Covered Act now because it is critically important that we consider and pass this legislation before we adjourn this year. No one can dispute the success of the CHIP program in enrolling and providing coverage for more then 6 million children nationwide. In 2005, West Virginia provided coverage for more then 38,000 children, and an expansion to reach additional children is currently underway. This is quite an accomplishment. But, the ongoing success of this program depends on adequate Federal funding for all States.

It is a sad truth that persistent barriers to health care coverage have resulted in annual increases in the total number of uninsured Americans. Today, 46 million Americans are uninsured for all or most of the year. I am particularly troubled in that, in 2005, the number of uninsured children increased for the first time since the CHIP program was implemented in 1998. The number of uninsured children now stands at 8.3 million.

This is unacceptable. We have taken a significant step back in terms of covering children, and this will only get worse if the $900 million Federal funding shortfall is not immediately addressed. Children are the least expensive group to insure, and our future depends on their good health and well-being. There is clear evidence that children with consistent access to health care services are more likely to become healthy adults and successful members of our communities. Like West Virginia, a number of States have expressed their willingness to expand the CHIP program, but we must hold up our end of the bargain and supply them with the resources necessary to make these positive changes. It would be irresponsible for us to allow additional children to go without this much needed access to care. It would also run counter to the goals Congress set out when we created CHIP in 1997.

Preserving health care coverage for children is not an objective beyond our reach. Although it represents only a temporary fix of the larger funding issues facing CHIP, the bill I am introducing today will alleviate the fiscal year 2007 shortfalls and ensure that children currently enrolled in CHIP do not lose their coverage. I congratulate my colleagues on the House side, Congressmen DEAL and NORWOOD, who introduced similar legislation at the end of last week. They understand this is something we can come together on, pass, and enact into law before Congress recesses for the elections. It is my hope that Congress will act on a bipartisan basis to more comprehensively address the long-term financial challenges facing CHIP when the program is reauthorized next year.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to make children's health care a priority during the limited time we have left this session. Working families depend on this program in order to access the health care services—like check-ups and prescriptions—that their children need. I hope we will not let them down. We should not.

I ask unanimous consent that the full text of this bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3913

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Keep Children Covered Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF SCHIP FUNDING SHORTFALLS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2104 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397dd) is amended—

(1) in each of subsections (a), (b)(1), and (c)(1), by striking ''subsection (d)'' and inserting ''subsections (d) and (h)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) SPECIAL RULE FOR REDISTRIBUTION OF UNSPENT FISCAL YEAR 2004 ALLOTMENTS AND ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENTS TO ELIMINATE FISCAL YEAR 2007 FUNDING SHORTFALLS.—

''(1) SPECIAL RULE FOR REDISTRIBUTION OF FISCAL YEAR 2004 ALLOTMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a State that expends all of its allotment under subsection (b) or (c) of this section for fiscal year 2004 by the end of fiscal year 2006 and is an initial shortfall State described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall redistribute to the State under subsection (f) of this section (from the fiscal year 2004 allotments of other States) the following amount:

''(i) STATE.—In the case of one of the 50 States or the District of Columbia, the amount specified in subparagraph (C)(i) (less the total of the amounts under clause (ii)), multiplied by the ratio of the amount specified in subparagraph (C)(ii) for the State to the amount specified in subparagraph (C)(iii).

''(ii) TERRITORY.—In the case of a commonwealth or territory described in subsection (c)(3), an amount that bears the same ratio to 1.05 percent of the amount specified in subparagraph (C)(i) as the ratio of the commonwealth's or territory's fiscal year 2004 allotment under subsection (c) bears to the total of all such allotments for such fiscal year under such subsection.

''(B) INITIAL SHORTFALL STATE DESCRIBED.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), an initial shortfall State is a State with a State child health plan approved under this title for which the Secretary estimates, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of the date of the enactment of this subsection, that the projected Federal expenditures under such plan for such State for fiscal year 2007 will exceed the sum of—

''(i) the amount of the State's allotments for each of fiscal years 2005 and 2006 that will not be expended by the end of fiscal year 2006; and

''(ii) the amount of the State's allotment for fiscal year 2007.

''(C) AMOUNTS USED IN COMPUTING REDISTRIBUTIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004 ALLOTMENTS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)—

''(i) the amount specified in this clause is the total amount of unspent fiscal year 2004 allotments available for redistribution under subsection (f);

''(ii) the amount specified in this clause for an initial shortfall State is the amount the Secretary determines will eliminate the estimated shortfall described in subparagraph (B) for the State; and

''(iii) the amount specified in this clause is the total sum of the amounts specified in clause (ii) for all initial shortfall States.

''(2) ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENTS TO ELIMINATE FISCAL YEAR 2007 FUNDING SHORTFALLS REMAINING AFTER REDISTRIBUTION OF UNSPENT FISCAL YEAR 2004 ALLOTMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the allotments provided under subsection (b) and (c) for fiscal year 2007, the Secretary shall allot to each remaining shortfall State described in subparagraph (B) such amount as the Secretary determines will eliminate the estimated shortfall described in such subparagraph for the State.

''(B) REMAINING SHORTFALL STATE DESCRIBED.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), a remaining shortfall State is a State (including a commonwealth or territory described in subsection (c)(3)) with a State child health plan approved under this title for which the Secretary estimates, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of the date of the enactment of this subsection, that the projected federal expenditures under such plan for such State for fiscal year 2007 will exceed the sum of—

''(i) the amount of the State's allotments for each of fiscal years 2005 and 2006 that will not be expended by the end of fiscal year 2006;

''(ii) the amount of the State's allotment for fiscal year 2007; and

''(iii) the amount, if any, of unspent allotments for fiscal year 2004 that are to be redistributed to the State during fiscal year 2007 in accordance with subsection (f) and paragraph (1).

''(C) 1-YEAR AVAILABILITY; NO REDISTRIBUTION OF UNEXPENDED ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENTS.—Notwithstanding subsections (e) and (f), amounts allotted to a remaining shortfall State pursuant to this paragraph shall only remain available for expenditure by the State through September 30, 2007. Any amounts of such allotments that remain unexpended as of such date shall not be subject to redistribution under subsection (f) and shall revert to the Treasury on October 1, 2007.

''(D) APPROPRIATION; ALLOTMENT AUTHORITY.—For the purpose of providing additional allotments to remaining shortfall States under this paragraph there is appropriated, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2007.''.

(b) EXTENDING AUTHORITY FOR QUALIFYING STATES TO USE CERTAIN FUNDS FOR MEDICAID EXPENDITURES.—Section 2105(g)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397ee(g)(1)(A)) is amended by striking ''or 2005'' and inserting ''2005, or 2006''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section apply to items and services furnished on or after October 1, 2006, without regard to whether or not regulations implementing such amendments have been issued.

(d) PERIOD OF EFFECTIVENESS.—Section 2104(h)(2) of the Social Security Act (as added by subsection (a)) shall terminate on September 30, 2007, and shall be considered to have expired notwithstanding section 257 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 907).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 572—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE WITH RESPECT TO RAISING AWARENESS AND ENHANCING THE STATE OF COMPUTER SECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES, AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. BURNS (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted for the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 572

Whereas over 205,000,000 Americans use the Internet in the United States, including over 84,000,000 home-users through broadband connections, to communicate with family and friends, manage their finances, pay their bills, improve their education, shop at home, and read about current events;

Whereas the approximately 26,000,000 small businesses in the United States, who represent 99.7 percent of all United States employers and employ 50 percent of the private work force, increasingly rely on the Internet to manage their businesses, expand their customer reach, and enhance their connection with their supply chain;

Whereas, according to the Department of Education, nearly 100 percent of public schools in the United States have Internet access, with approximately 93 percent of instructional classrooms connected to the Internet;

Whereas having access to the Internet in the classroom enhances the education of our children by providing access to educational online content and encouraging responsible self-initiative to discover research resources;

Whereas, according to the Pew Institute, almost 9 in 10 teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17, or 87 percent of all youth (approximately 21,000,000 people) use the Internet, and 78 percent (or about 16,000,000 students) say they use the Internet at school;

Whereas teen use of the Internet at school has grown 45 percent since 2000, and educating children of all ages about safe, secure, and ethical practices will not only protect their computer systems, but will also protect the physical safety of our children, and help them become good cyber citizens;

Whereas the growth and popularity of social networking websites have attracted millions of teenagers, providing them with a range of valuable services;

Whereas teens should be taught how to avoid potential threats like cyber bullies, online predators, and identity thieves that they may encounter while using cyber services;

Whereas the critical infrastructure of our Nation relies on the secure and reliable operation of information networks to support our Nation's financial services, energy, telecommunications, transportation, health care, and emergency response systems;

Whereas cyber security is a critical part of the overall homeland security of our Nation, in particular the control systems that control and monitor our drinking water, dams, and other water management systems, our electricity grids, oil and gas supplies, and pipeline distribution networks, our transportation systems, and other critical manufacturing processes;

Whereas terrorists and others with malicious motives have demonstrated an interest in utilizing cyber means to attack our Nation;

Whereas the mission of the Department of Homeland Security includes securing the homeland against cyber terrorism and other attacks;

Whereas Internet users and our information infrastructure face an increasing threat of malicious attacks through viruses, worms, Trojans, and unwanted programs such as spyware, adware, hacking tools, and password stealers, that are frequent and fast in propagation, are costly to repair, and disable entire computer systems;

Whereas, according to Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, since February 2005, over 90,000,000 records containing personally-identifiable information have been breached, and the overall increase in serious data breaches in both the private and public sectors are threatening the security and well-being of the citizens of the United States;

Whereas consumers face significant financial and personal privacy losses due to identity theft and fraud, as reported in over 686,000 consumer complaints in 2005 received by the Consumer Sentinel database operated by the Federal Trade Commission;

Whereas Internet-related complaints in 2005 accounted for 46 percent of all reported fraud complaints received by the Federal Trade Commission;

Whereas the total amount of monetary losses for such Internet-related complaints exceeded $680,000,000, with a median loss of $350 per complaint;

Whereas the youth of our Nation face increasing threats online such as inappropriate content or child predators;

Whereas, according to the National Center For Missing and Exploited Children, 34 percent of teens are exposed to unwanted sexually explicit material on the Internet, and 1

in 7 children report having been approached by an online child predator;

Whereas national organizations, policymakers, government agencies, private sector companies, nonprofit institutions, schools, academic organizations, consumers, and the media recognize the need to increase awareness of computer security and enhance the level of computer and national security in the United States;

Whereas the mission of National Cyber Security Alliance is to increase awareness of cyber security practices and technologies to home-users, students, teachers, and small businesses through educational activities, online resources and checklists, and public service announcements; and

Whereas the National Cyber Security Alliance has designated October as National Cyber Security Awareness Month, which will provide an opportunity to educate the people of the United States about computer security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Cyber Security Awareness Month; and

(2) will work with Federal agencies, national organizations, businesses, and educational institutions to encourage the development and implementation of existing and future computer security voluntary consensus standards, practices, and technologies in order to enhance the state of computer security in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 573—CALLING ON THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION FROM CONFLICT TO SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN UGANDA

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and BROWNBACK, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BIDEN and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted for the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 573

Whereas, for nearly 2 decades, the Government of Uganda has been engaged in a conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (referred to in this preamble as the ''LRA'') that has resulted in—

(1) the deaths of approximately 200,000 individuals from violence and disease; and

(2) the displacement of more than 1,600,000 individuals from the northern and eastern regions of Uganda;

Whereas more than half of those internally-displaced individuals are under the age of 15, and 95 percent of those individuals live in absolute poverty in camps where they face malnutrition, high rates of AIDS and malaria, and egregious abuses of their human rights;

Whereas the LRA has used brutal tactics during that conflict, including the abduction and abuse of more than 25,000 children who the organization forces to attack, rape, and murder members of their families and communities on behalf of the LRA;

Whereas continued instability and a lack of security in the northern region of Uganda has severely hindered the delivery of sufficient humanitarian assistance and services to individuals who have been displaced or otherwise negatively affected by that conflict;

Whereas spillover from the war in the northern region of Uganda have had negative consequences in the neighboring countries of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Whereas a successful transition to sustainable peace in the northern region of Uganda and throughout the country will depend in large part on a coordinated and comprehensive effort by the Government of Uganda, regional partners, and the international community to create new social, economic, and political opportunities for the citizens of Uganda who are affected by that conflict;

Whereas a sustainable political resolution to that conflict must include a range of locally and nationally driven reconciliation efforts that will require the endorsement and involvement of all parties to the conflict, as well as support from the international community;

Whereas the 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, published by the Department of State, relating to the Government of Uganda indicated that the ''security forces committed unlawful killings...and were responsible for deaths as a result of torture'' along with other ''serious problems'', including repression of political opposition, official impunity, and violence against women and children;

Whereas, in the Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act (Public Law 108–283; 118 Stat. 912), the Senate—

(1) declared its support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the northern and eastern regions of Uganda; and

(2) called for the United States and the international community to assist in rehabilitation, reconstruction, and demobilization efforts; and

Whereas the cessation of hostilities agreement, that was mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan and signed by representatives of the Government of Uganda and the LRA on August 20, 2006—

(1) required both parties to cease all hostile military and media offensives; and

(2) asked the Sudanese People's Liberation Army to facilitate the safe assembly of LRA fighters in designated areas for the duration of the peace talks: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the delegates from the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army for agreeing to a cessation of hostilities for the first time in the 20 years of that devastating conflict;

(2) recognizes the leadership role that the Government of Southern Sudan played in mediating that cessation of hostilities and establishing a framework within which a lasting peace to that conflict could be achieved;

(3) emphasizes the importance of a complete implementation of the cessation of hostilities agreement by all parties to maintain progress towards a permanent resolution of that conflict;

(4) expresses the support of the citizens of the United States for the people of Uganda who have endured decades of violence as a result of that conflict;

(5) entreats all parties to address issues of accountability and impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to support broader national reconciliation efforts;

(6) strongly encourages the Government of Uganda to improve the professionalism of Ugandan military personnel currently stationed in the northern and eastern regions of Uganda, with an emphasis on enhancing respect for human rights, accountability for abuses, and effective protection of civilians;

(7) urges the Government of Uganda to follow through and augment its resettlement plan by—

(A) expanding social services;

(B) deploying professional civil servants; and

(C) developing the legal, political, and security infrastructure—

(i) necessary to facilitate the freedom of movement of civilians to their homes, land, and areas within and around camps; and

(ii) essential to fulfill the needs of returnees and former combatants; and

(8) calls on the United States Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, as well as the international community—

(A) to provide adequate and coordinated humanitarian assistance through nongovernmental organizations to the individuals and areas most affected by that conflict;

(B) to, while providing humanitarian assistance, pay particular attention to women and children who have been victimized; and

(C) to provide—

(i) sufficient technical assistance for the demobilization and reintegration of rebel combatants and abductees;

(ii) both financial and technical support for reconciliation and reconstruction efforts; and

(iii) diplomatic and logistical support for the cessation of hostilities agreement and subsequent progress towards a sustainable peace in Uganda.

SENATE RESOLUTION 574—RECOGNIZING THE NORTH CAROLINA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 70TH ANNIVERSARY AND SALUTING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF ITS MEMBERS AND STAFF ON BEHALF OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY AND THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. DOLE) submitted for the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 574

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation was founded on March 2, 1936, in Greenville, North Carolina, during the Great Depression, a period of national frustration and economic disaster;

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation was established to organize North Carolina's farm families and to maximize their ability to engage in national, State, and local policy debates that affect North Carolina agriculture;

Whereas at its first annual meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina, on July 30, 1936, the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation had slightly over 2,000 members from 24 counties;

Whereas in 2005, the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation was composed of approximately 490,000 member families from all 100 counties of North Carolina, making it the second largest State farm bureau in the United States;

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation created a Women's Program in 1942 and a Young Farmer and Rancher Program in the 1970s to encourage leadership development among its members;

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation is committed to advancing agricultural education in North Carolina through its R. Flake Shaw Scholarship Fund, established in 1958, and the Institute for Future Agricultural Leaders, founded in 1984, which help ensure that the young men and women of North Carolina are well prepared for careers in agriculture;

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation created and continues to sponsor the Ag-In-The-Classroom initiative to introduce children to North Carolina agriculture and to improve the quality of teachers in North Carolina schools;

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation's visionary Board of Directors developed numerous initiatives that enable farmers to effectively produce and sell their products, such as the organization's marketing program, and that provide farmers with access to necessary farm resources, such as the tires, batteries, and accessories service;

Whereas in 1953, the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation founded the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation Mutual Insurance Company, which is North Carolina's largest domestic insurance company;

Whereas the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation Mutual Insurance Company is composed entirely of farmers; and

Whereas the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation is a true grassroots organization dedicated to ensuring that agriculture remains North Carolina's number 1 industry through the organization's unique policy development process and active legislative and regulatory advocacy programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation on the occasion of its 70th anniversary and salutes the outstanding service of its members and staff on behalf of the agricultural community and the people of North Carolina.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5019. Mr. FRIST (for Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2463, to designate as wilderness certain National Forest System land in the State of New Hampshire.

SA 5020. Mr. FRIST (for Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2463, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 5019. Mr. FRIST (for Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2463, to designate as wilderness certain National Forest System land in the State of New Hampshire; as follows:

Beginning on page 1, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 2, line 2, and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''New England Wilderness Act of 2006''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definition of Secretary.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

Sec. 101. Definition of State.
Sec. 102. Designation of wilderness areas.
Sec. 103. Map and description.
Sec. 104. Administration.

TITLE II—VERMONT

Sec. 201. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

Sec. 211. Designation.
Sec. 212. Map and description.
Sec. 213. Administration.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

Sec. 221. Designation.
Sec. 222. Map and description.
Sec. 223. Administration of National Recreation Area.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

In this Act, the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEC. 101. DEFINITION OF STATE.

In this title, the term ''State'' means the State of New Hampshire.

On page 2, line 3, strike ''**3**'' and insert ''**102**''.

On page 2, line 23, strike ''**4**'' and insert ''**103**''.

On page 3, line 2, strike ''3'' and insert ''102''.

On page 3, line 14, strike ''**5**'' and insert ''**104**''.

On page 3, line 16, strike ''section'' and insert ''title''.

On page 3, line 24, strike ''Act'' and insert ''title''.

On page 4, line 5, strike ''Act'' and insert ''title''.

On page 4, line 10, strike ''3'' and insert ''102''.

On page 4, after line 16, add the following:

TITLE II—VERMONT

SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''Management Plan'' means the Green Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

(2) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Vermont.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

SEC. 211. DESIGNATION.

In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the following areas in the State are designated as wilderness areas and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

(1) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 28,491 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Glastenbury Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Glastenbury Wilderness''.

(2) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 12,333 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Joseph Battell Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Joseph Battell Wilderness''.

(3) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 3,757 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Breadloaf Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Breadloaf Wilderness''.

(4) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 2,338 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Lye Brook Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Lye Brook Wilderness''.

(5) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 752 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Peru Peak Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Peru Peak Wilderness''.

(6) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 47 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Big Branch Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Big Branch Wilderness''.

SEC. 212. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of each wilderness area designated by section 211 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 213. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to valid rights in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, each wilderness area designated under this subtitle and in the Green Mountain National Forest (as of the date of enactment of this Act) shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State, including the stocking of fish in rivers and streams in the State to support the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.

(c) TRAILS.—The Forest Service shall allow the continuance of —

(1) the Appalachian National Scenic Trail;

(2) the Long Trail;

(3) the Catamount Trail; and

(4) the marking and maintenance of associated trails and trail structures of the Trails referred to in this subsection, consistent with the management direction (including objectives, standards, guidelines, and agreements with partners) established for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Long Trail, and Catamount Trail under the Management Plan.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

SEC. 221. DESIGNATION.

Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 15,857 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area—Proposed'', dated September 2006, is designated as the ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area''.

SEC. 222. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the national recreation area designated by section 221 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this subtitle, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 223. ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid rights existing on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall administer the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area in accordance with—

(1) laws (including rules and regulations) applicable to units of the National Forest System; and

(2) the management direction (including objectives, standards, and guidelines) established for the Moosalamoo Recreation and Education Management Area under the Management Plan.

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State.

(c) ESCARPMENT AND ECOLOGICAL AREAS.—Nothing in this subtitle prevents the Secretary from managing the Green Mountain Escarpment Management Area and the Ecological Special Areas, as described in the Management Plan.

SA 5020. Mr. FRIST (for Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2463, to designate as wilderness certain National Forest System land in the State of New Hampshire; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''To designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 19, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to consider the following nominations: General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, U.S. European Command; Vice Admiral James G. Stavridis, USN, for appointment to the grade of admiral and to be Commander, U.S. Southern Command; Nelson M. Ford to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller; and Ronald J. James to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 19, 2006, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on ''Combating Child Pornography by Eliminating Pornographers' Access to the Financial Payment System.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a full committee business meeting off the floor on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at a time to be determined.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a full committee hearing on Online Child Pornography on Tuesday, September 19, 2006, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 19, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at 10 a.m. for a hearing titled, ''Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on ''The Cost of Crime: Understanding the Financial and Human Impact of Criminal Activity'' on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witness List

Panel I: Harley Lappin, Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Washington, DC; Jeffrey Sedgwick, Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Washington, DC; Jens Ludwig, Professor, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, Georgetown University, Washington, DC; Mary Lou Leary, Executive Director, National Center for Victims of Crime, Washington, DC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a markup on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 immediately following the first vote, approximately 12 p.m., in Room S–219, The Capitol.

Agenda

I. Nominations: Terrence W. Boyle, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit; William James Haynes, II, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit; Kent A. Jordan, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit; Peter D. Keisler, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit; William Gerry Myers, III, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit; Norman Randy Smith, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit; Valerie L. Baker, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California; Francisco Augusto Besosa, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico; Philip S. Gutierrez, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California; Marcia Morales Howard, to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida; John Alfred Jarvey, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Iowa; Sara Elizabeth Lioi, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on ''Judicial Nominations'' on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at 3 p.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witness List

Panel I: The Honorable Thad Cochran, United States Senator, R–MS; The Honorable Trent Lott, United States Senator, R–MS; The Honorable Carl Levin, United States Senator, D–MI; The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, United States Senator, D–MI.

Panel II: Robert James Jonker to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan; Judge Paul Lewis Maloney to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan; Judge Janet T. Neff to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan; Judge Leslie Southwick to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Finance Committee fellows and interns be allowed floor privileges today: Ali Sarafzade, Tory Cyr, Brett Youngerman, John Lageson, and Mia Warner.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORTING TRANSITION FROM CONFLICT TO SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN UGANDA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 573, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 573) calling on the United States Government and the international community to support the successful transition from conflict to sustainable peace in Uganda.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 573) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 573

Whereas, for nearly 2 decades, the Government of Uganda has been engaged in a conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (referred to in this preamble as the ''LRA'') that has resulted in—

(1) the deaths of approximately 200,000 individuals from violence and disease; and

(2) the displacement of more than 1,600,000 individuals from the northern and eastern regions of Uganda;

Whereas more than half of those internally-displaced individuals are under the age of 15, and 95 percent of those individuals live in absolute poverty in camps where they face malnutrition, high rates of AIDS and malaria, and egregious abuses of their human rights;

Whereas the LRA has used brutal tactics during that conflict, including the abduction and abuse of more than 25,000 children who the organization forces to attack, rape, and murder members of their families and communities on behalf of the LRA;

Whereas continued instability and a lack of security in the northern region of Uganda has severely hindered the delivery of sufficient humanitarian assistance and services to individuals who have been displaced or otherwise negatively affected by that conflict;

Whereas spillover from the war in the northern region of Uganda have had negative consequences in the neighboring countries of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Whereas a successful transition to sustainable peace in the northern region of Uganda and throughout the country will depend in large part on a coordinated and comprehensive effort by the Government of Uganda, regional partners, and the international community to create new social, economic, and political opportunities for the citizens of Uganda who are affected by that conflict;

Whereas a sustainable political resolution to that conflict must include a range of locally and nationally driven reconciliation efforts that will require the endorsement and involvement of all parties to the conflict, as well as support from the international community;

Whereas the 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, published by the Department of State, relating to the Government of Uganda indicated that the ''security forces committed unlawful killings...and were responsible for deaths as a result of torture'' along with other ''serious problems'', including repression of political opposition, official impunity, and violence against women and children;

Whereas, in the Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act (Public Law 108–283; 118 Stat. 912), the Senate—

(1) declared its support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the northern and eastern regions of Uganda; and

(2) called for the United States and the international community to assist in rehabilitation, reconstruction, and demobilization efforts; and

Whereas the cessation of hostilities agreement, that was mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan and signed by representatives of the Government of Uganda and the LRA on August 20, 2006—

(1) required both parties to cease all hostile military and media offensives; and

(2) asked the Sudanese People's Liberation Army to facilitate the safe assembly of LRA fighters in designated areas for the duration of the peace talks: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the delegates from the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army for agreeing to a cessation of hostilities for the first time in the 20 years of that devastating conflict;

(2) recognizes the leadership role that the Government of Southern Sudan played in mediating that cessation of hostilities and establishing a framework within which a lasting peace to that conflict could be achieved;

(3) emphasizes the importance of a complete implementation of the cessation of hostilities agreement by all parties to maintain progress towards a permanent resolution of that conflict;

(4) expresses the support of the citizens of the United States for the people of Uganda who have endured decades of violence as a result of that conflict;

(5) entreats all parties to address issues of accountability and impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to support broader national reconciliation efforts;

(6) strongly encourages the Government of Uganda to improve the professionalism of Ugandan military personnel currently stationed in the northern and eastern regions of Uganda, with an emphasis on enhancing respect for human rights, accountability for abuses, and effective protection of civilians;

(7) urges the Government of Uganda to follow through and augment its resettlement plan by—

(A) expanding social services;

(B) deploying professional civil servants; and

(C) developing the legal, political, and security infrastructure—

(i) necessary to facilitate the freedom of movement of civilians to their homes, land, and areas within and around camps; and

(ii) essential to fulfill the needs of returnees and former combatants; and

(8) calls on the United States Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, as well as the international community—

(A) to provide adequate and coordinated humanitarian assistance through nongovernmental organizations to the individuals and areas most affected by that conflict;

(B) to, while providing humanitarian assistance, pay particular attention to women and children who have been victimized; and

(C) to provide—

(i) sufficient technical assistance for the demobilization and reintegration of rebel combatants and abductees;

(ii) both financial and technical support for reconciliation and reconstruction efforts; and

(iii) diplomatic and logistical support for the cessation of hostilities agreement and subsequent progress towards a sustainable peace in Uganda.

NEW HAMPSHIRE WILDERNESS ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture be discharged from further consideration of S. 2463 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2463) to designate as wilderness certain National Forest System land in the State of New Hampshire.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Leahy amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the title amendment be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments (Nos. 5019 and 5020) were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 5019

Purpose: To designate certain National Forest System land in the State of Vermont for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and designate a National Recreation Area)

Beginning on page 1, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 2, line 2, and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''New England Wilderness Act of 2006''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definition of Secretary.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

Sec. 101. Definition of State.
Sec. 102. Designation of wilderness areas.
Sec. 103. Map and description.
Sec. 104. Administration.

TITLE II—VERMONT

Sec. 201. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

Sec. 211. Designation.
Sec. 212. Map and description.
Sec. 213. Administration.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

Sec. 221. Designation.
Sec. 222. Map and description.
Sec. 223. Administration of National Recreation Area.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

In this Act, the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEC. 101. DEFINITION OF STATE.

In this title, the term ''State'' means the State of New Hampshire.

On page 2, line 3, strike ''**3**'' and insert ''**102**''.

On page 2, line 23, strike ''**4**'' and insert ''**103**''.

On page 3, line 2, strike ''3'' and insert ''102''.

On page 3, line 14, strike ''**5**'' and insert ''**104**''.

On page 3, line 16, strike ''section'' and insert ''title''.

On page 3, line 24, strike ''Act'' and insert ''title''.

On page 4, line 5, strike ''Act'' and insert ''title''.

On page 4, line 10, strike ''3'' and insert ''102''.

On page 4, after line 16, add the following:

TITLE II—VERMONT

SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''Management Plan'' means the Green Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

(2) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Vermont.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

SEC. 211. DESIGNATION.

In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the following areas in the State are designated as wilderness areas and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

(1) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 28,491 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Glastenbury Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Glastenbury Wilderness''.

(2) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 12,333 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Joseph Battell Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Joseph Battell Wilderness''.

(3) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 3,757 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Breadloaf Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Breadloaf Wilderness''.

(4) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 2,338 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Lye Brook Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Lye Brook Wilderness''.

(5) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 752 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Peru Peak Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Peru Peak Wilderness''.

(6) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 47 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Big Branch Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Big Branch Wilderness''.

SEC. 212. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of each wilderness area designated by section 211 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 213. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to valid rights in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, each wilderness area designated under this subtitle and in the Green Mountain National Forest (as of the date of enactment of this Act) shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State, including the stocking of fish in rivers and streams in the State to support the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.

(c) TRAILS.—The Forest Service shall allow the continuance of —

(1) the Appalachian National Scenic Trail;

(2) the Long Trail;

(3) the Catamount Trail; and

(4) the marking and maintenance of associated trails and trail structures of the Trails referred to in this subsection, consistent with the management direction (including objectives, standards, guidelines, and agreements with partners) established for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Long Trail, and Catamount Trail under the Management Plan.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

SEC. 221. DESIGNATION.

Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 15,857 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area—Proposed'', dated September 2006, is designated as the ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area''.

SEC. 222. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the national recreation area designated by section 221 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this subtitle, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 223. ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid rights existing on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall administer the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area in accordance with—

(1) laws (including rules and regulations) applicable to units of the National Forest System; and

(2) the management direction (including objectives, standards, and guidelines) established for the Moosalamoo Recreation and Education Management Area under the Management Plan.

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State.

(c) ESCARPMENT AND ECOLOGICAL AREAS.—Nothing in this subtitle prevents the Secretary from managing the Green Mountain Escarpment Management Area and the Ecological Special Areas, as described in the Management Plan.

AMENDMENT NO. 5020

Amend the title so as to read: ''To designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.''.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2463

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''New England Wilderness Act of 2006''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Section 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definition of Secretary.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

Sec. 101. Definition of State.
Sec. 102. Designation of wilderness areas.
Sec. 103. Map and description.
Sec. 104. Administration.

TITLE II—VERMONT

Sec. 201. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

Sec. 211. Designation.
Sec. 212. Map and description.
Sec. 213. Administration.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

Sec. 221. Designation.
Sec. 222. Map and description.
Sec. 223. Administration of National Recreation Area.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

In this Act, the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

TITLE I—NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEC. 101. DEFINITION OF STATE.

In this title, the term ''State'' means the State of New Hampshire.

SEC. 102. DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS.

In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the following Federal land in the State is designated as wilderness and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

(1) Certain Federal land managed by the Forest Service, comprising approximately 23,700 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Proposed Wild River Wilderness—White Mountain National Forest'', dated February 6, 2006, which shall be known as the ''Wild River Wilderness''.

(2) Certain Federal land managed by the Forest Service, comprising approximately 10,800 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Proposed Sandwich Range Wilderness Additions—White Mountain National Forest'', dated February 6, 2006, and which are incorporated in the Sandwich Range Wilderness, as designated by the New Hampshire Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law 98–323; 98 Stat. 259).

SEC. 103. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of each wilderness area designated by section 102 with the committees of appropriate jurisdiction in the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(b) FORCE AND EFFECT.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public

inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 104. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to valid existing rights, each wilderness area designated under this title shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with—

(1) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(2) the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE OF WILDERNESS ACT.—With respect to any wilderness area designated by this title, any reference in the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—As provided in section 4(d)(7) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(7)), nothing in this title affects any jurisdiction or responsibility of the State with respect to wildlife and fish in the State.

(d) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land in the wilderness areas designated by section 102 are withdrawn from—

(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) disposition under the mineral leasing laws (including geothermal leasing laws).

TITLE II—VERMONT

SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''Management Plan'' means the Green Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

(2) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Vermont.

Subtitle A—Designation of Wilderness Areas

SEC. 211. DESIGNATION.

In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the following areas in the State are designated as wilderness areas and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

(1) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 28,491 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Glastenbury Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Glastenbury Wilderness''.

(2) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 12,333 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Joseph Battell Wilderness—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Joseph Battell Wilderness''.

(3) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 3,757 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Breadloaf Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Breadloaf Wilderness''.

(4) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 2,338 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Lye Brook Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Lye Brook Wilderness''.

(5) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 752 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Peru Peak Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Peru Peak Wilderness''.

(6) Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 47 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Big Branch Wilderness Additions—Proposed'', dated September 2006, which shall be known as the ''Big Branch Wilderness''.

SEC. 212. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of each wilderness area designated by section 211 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 213. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to valid rights in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, each wilderness area designated under this subtitle and in the Green Mountain National Forest (as of the date of enactment of this Act) shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State, including the stocking of fish in rivers and streams in the State to support the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.

(c) TRAILS.—The Forest Service shall allow the continuance of—

(1) the Appalachian National Scenic Trail;

(2) the Long Trail;

(3) the Catamount Trail; and

(4) the marking and maintenance of associated trails and trail structures of the Trails referred to in this subsection, consistent with the management direction (including objectives, standards, guidelines, and agreements with partners) established for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Long Trail, and Catamount Trail under the Management Plan.

Subtitle B—Moosalamoo National Recreation Area

SEC. 221. DESIGNATION.

Certain Federal land managed by the United States Forest Service, comprising approximately 15,857 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area—Proposed'', dated September 2006, is designated as the ''Moosalamoo National Recreation Area''.

SEC. 222. MAP AND DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the national recreation area designated by section 221 with—

(1) the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(b) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this subtitle, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 223. ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid rights existing on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall administer the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area in accordance with—

(1) laws (including rules and regulations) applicable to units of the National Forest System; and

(2) the management direction (including objectives, standards, and guidelines) established for the Moosalamoo Recreation and Education Management Area under the Management Plan.

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this subtitle affects the jurisdiction of the State with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land located in the State.

(c) ESCARPMENT AND ECOLOGICAL AREAS.—Nothing in this subtitle prevents the Secretary from managing the Green Mountain Escarpment Management Area and the Ecological Special Areas, as described in the Management Plan.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES—H.R. 4954

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the bill, H.R. 4954, the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate with a ratio of 9 to 7.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Presiding Officer (Mr. SESSIONS) appointed from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mr. LEVIN; from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. LOTT, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INOUYE, and Mr. LAUTENBERG; from the Committee on Finance, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. BAUCUS; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SARBANES and an additional conferee, Mrs. MURRAY.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House on H.R. 2864.

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives disagreeing to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2864) entitled ''an act to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes,'' and asks a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate insist on its amendment, agree to conference with the House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees at a ratio of 7 to 5.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SESSIONS) appointed Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOND, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. CHAFEE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. VITTER, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CARPER conferees on the part of the Senate.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 20. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for up to 30 minutes with the first 15 minutes under the control of the Republican leader or his designee and the final 15 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee; further, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 6061, the Secure Fence Act, with 1 hour of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, followed by a vote on the motion to invoke cloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today we passed the Oman Free Trade bill by a vote of 63 to 31. I am pleased that we were finally able to proceed to a vote on the confirmation of a very important nomination, and that is the nomination of Alice Fisher to be an Assistant Attorney General. Tomorrow we will have a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the Secure Fence Act, a bill on border security. That vote will occur at approximately 11 a.m., and this will be the first vote of the day. I hope that cloture will be invoked, and if it is invoked, I would hope that we could begin the bill as quickly as possible.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:31 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 20, 2006, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate Tuesday, September 19, 2006:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ALICE S. FISHER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS LAUNCHED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and humility that I rise today to commemorate the lives of the thousands of victims and heroes of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of those whose lives were needlessly cut short on that day. In addition, I rise to pay tribute to those who have died at the hands of the same threat which brought the September 11th attacks. From 1983, with the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon killing 241 American service members, to the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, killing six, Islamic fascists have continued with attacks against the United States at the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the USS *Cole* in Yemen. I mention these events because it is essential for Americans to remember that the threat responsible for perpetuating these attacks is the same unending threat against which we are fighting today in the Global War on Terror. This enemy is methodical, patient, determined, and bound by one unifying purpose: the complete annihilation of all who do not subscribe to their warped vision of Islam by pursuing a murderous ideology.

While some setbacks have occurred in our efforts, we have made tremendous progress in confronting this threat, head-on. We must acknowledge the steadfast resolution of the Administration and the commitment and diligence of those in our intelligence community. Over the past 5 years, the Republican-led Congress has spent over $150 billion on homeland security. Congressional action on a variety of policies has provided those in our intelligence community with the critical tools needed to prevent future terrorist attacks on our homeland. Today, our service men and women are engaging the enemy abroad so the terrorists will not bring their violence to America. Because of the exemplary service of those in our military, the terrorists can no longer establish safe havens in areas of the Middle East where they once roamed freely.

Our message to the families and friends of those who fell on September 11th, is that America remains united in ensuring your sacrifices and those of your loved ones were not made in vain. America will always cherish the memories of these heroes and will remain committed to defending the principles for which this Nation stands, including principles as fundamental as individual liberty, justice, and the rule of law.

IN HONOR OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF OHIO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Ohio (HCCO), as they celebrate 25 years of promotion and support of the economic growth and development for Hispanic business owners.

The HCCO was formed in 1981 to address the glaring absence of Hispanic-owned businesses in American society. Concerned, motivated and determined, a small group of Hispanic business owners united forces to incorporate the HCCO as a recognized non-profit in 1983. The membership and scope of services of the HCCO has grown, yet the mission has remained the same—to focus on providing assistance, services and support to local Hispanic business owners.

Over the past quarter century, HCCO has vastly evolved from its diminutive beginnings to a viable coalition of business owners that represent the interests and memberships of more than 7,500 Hispanic-owned businesses in the State of Ohio. The HCCO provides a wide range of support services, including: the sponsorship of seminars, workshops and networking luncheons and dinners; technical assistance and support; discounts on medical and dental benefits; and a wide range of support services for individuals interested in starting their own business.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Ohio, as they celebrate 25 years of service and promotion of economic justice for Americans of Hispanic heritage. As they work together to create avenues of business opportunity for Hispanic Americans, the pathways to economic security and stability for every American is elevated from a vision, to reality.

IN HONOR OF LUIS ALEJO

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Luis Alejo on being awarded the 2005 Democrat of the Year for Santa Cruz County, given by the Democratic Central Committee, DCC, of Santa Cruz. Luis is an amazing young man with many attributes that make him a perfect candidate for this special award. He is a passionate, zealous, and intelligent person with a drive to educate and assist those who need it the most.

Luis' academic achievements help him work to better the community and residents of Santa Cruz County. Luis, a native of Watsonville, California, received dual B.A. degrees from UC Berkeley in 1997 and his Juris Doctorate (JD) from UC Davis School of Law in 2001. He received his master's degree in education from Harvard University in 2003. His academic accomplishments led him back home, where he has been an active member of the community.

After graduating from Harvard, Luis came back to Watsonville where he became a staff attorney for California Rural Legal Assistance, CRLA, While working at the CRLA, Luis worked on education, housing, public benefits and civil rights cases on behalf of low-income families and residents. Luis has always been a champion for empowering those who feel their rights have been violated. Luis has also worked to educate people on the rights given to them as laid out in the Constitution.

Luis brought his passion into the classroom as a high school teacher in Watsonville. As a former teacher he continues to inspire Watsonville youth as the director of the Student Empowerment Project. Luis later became a member of the California advisor committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, of which he was nominated by a former California Supreme Court Justice, Cruz Reynoso. As a civil rights activist, he has been the point person for distributing valuable information to Watsonville residents about the process and requirements to become naturalized citizens.

As a member of the DCC, Luis has worked tirelessly to modify by-laws and endorsement policies and procedures within the organization. He is currently in charge of the endorsement program for all the political races for 2006 in Santa Cruz County. As the Watsonville representative of the DCC, Luis has effectively organized Watsonville residents in order to unite them on Democratic causes through the creation of the Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club.

Luis is currently the chair of the Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club. The Pajaro Valley community points to Luis as the key person who has brought inspiration and resources to Watsonville. He also spearheaded a registration drive targeting voters in order to educate them on how to get their voices heard.

Mr. Speaker, for all of these reasons, it is with great pleasure that I acknowledge Luis Alejo. He has proven himself to be a person who works for the people of the community, and his hard work has changed Santa Cruz County for the better. He continues to educate people, and for that I acknowledge him today.

DR. G.S. AULAKH WINS INTERNATIONAL PEACE PRIZE AWARD

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, the President of the Council of

Khalistan, whom many of us know, has been awarded the International Peace Prize Award by Dal Khalsa USA. It was awarded for his tireless efforts in support of peace in South Asia and freedom for the Sikh nation. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Aulakh on this prestigious award and congratulate Dal Khalsa on selecting such a worthy honoree. Dr. Aulakh bas worked for over 20 years to free the Sikh nation from oppression that has taken the lives of more than a quarter of a million Sikhs and left over 52,000 as political prisoners. He has worked with many of us here in Congress on both sides of the aisle to expose this repression and free his people.

Mr. Speaker, we should help this struggle by declaring our support for a free and fair plebiscite in Khalistan, Kashmir, Nagaland, and wherever they are seeking the kind of freedom that we enjoy, and we should stop giving aid and trade to India until it stops oppressing its people.

I would like to insert the press release on Dr. Aulakh's award into the RECORD.

DR. AULAKH RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL PEACE AWARD

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 12, 2006.—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh. President of the Council of Khalistan, received the International Peace Prize Award on August 27 from Dal Khalsa of America, headed by Sardar Paramjit Singh Sekhon. The award was presented at a ceremony at the Fremont Gurdwara in Fremont, California. He was nominated for this prestigious award by Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon, Managing Editor of the International Journal of Sikh Affairs. According to a Dal Khalsa USA press release, he was given the award ''for his tireless service to preserve peace in South Asia in particular and the world in general.'' The release cites Dr. Aulakh for ''continuing the Sikhs'' struggle to regain their lost sovereignty, independence, and political power, by peaceful means.''

The award was presented for Dr. Aulakh's continuing efforts to internationalize the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent Sikh struggle for independence and the human rights violations against the Sikhs in India. He has been a tireless worker for the cause of Sikh freedom. Dr. Aulakh has raised awareness of the massive human-rights violations in India.

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikh infants, children, youth, men, women, and elderly since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 90,000 Muslims in Kashmir, tens of thousands of Christians and Muslims throughout the country, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and others.

Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated, Khalra was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family. No one has been brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra. The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him. He has never been tried for the Jathedar Kaunke murder. In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government had paid over 41,000 cash bounties for killing Sikhs. A report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) quotes the Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing ''if we add up the figures of the last few years the murder of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]'' The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs ''worse than a genocide.''

The MASR report states that 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial, mostly under a repressive law known as the ''Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act'' (TADA), which expired in 1995. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984! There has been no list published of those who were acquitted under TADA and those who are still rotting in Indian jails. Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. ''We demand the Immediate release of all these political prisoners,'' said Dr. Aulakh. ''Why are there political prisoners in a democracy?''

Missionary Graham Staines was murdered along with his two sons, ages 8 and 10, by a mob of militant, fundamentalist Hindu nationalists who set fire to the jeep, surrounded it, and chanted ''Victory to Hannuman,'' a Hindu god. Missionary Joseph Cooper was beaten so badly that he had to spend a week in an Indian hospital. Then the Indian government threw him out of the country. None of the people involved has been tried. The persons who have murdered priests, raped nuns, and burned Christian churches have not been charged or tried. Police broke up a Christian religious festival with gunfire.

The murderers of 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat have never been brought to trial. An Indian newspaper reported that the police were ordered not to get involved in that massacre, a frightening parallel to the Delhi massacre of Sikhs in 1984.

''Sikhs and other minorities cannot live under Indian rule,'' said Dr. Aulakh. ''The actions of the Indian government have made it clear that there is no place for Sikhs or other minorities such as Christians, Muslims, Dalits, and others in India's Hindu theocracy,'' he said. Dr. Aulakh took note of the charges filed against 35 Sikhs for making speeches and raising the Khalistani flag. ''Clearly India is scared of the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent movement for freedom inside and outside Punjab, Khalistan,'' he said.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. Currently, there are 17 freedom movements within India's borders. It has 18 official languages.

''Only a sovereign, independent Khalistan will end the repression and raise the standard of living for the people of Punjab,'' said Dr. Gurmit Aulakh. ''As Professor Darshan Singh, former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not a Khallstani, he is not a Sikh.','' Dr. Aulakh said. ''We must free Khalistan now.''

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JORDAN PITTMAN

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Ms. Jordan Pittman of Littleton, Colorado. Ms. Pittman has been accepted to the People to People World Leadership Forum here in our Nation's Capital. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the People to People program founded by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Ms. Pittman has displayed academic excellence, community involvement and leadership potential. All students chosen for the program have been identified and nominated by educators.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in paying tribute to Jordan Pittman, and wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

VALLEJO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Vallejo Symphony Orchestra as it celebrates its 75th season, 2006–2007.

The mission of the Vallejo Symphony Orchestra, VSO, is to present performances of symphonic music of the highest possible artistic excellence for the citizens of Vallejo and all of Solano County; to cultivate and nurture the appreciation and enjoyment of classical music in people of all ages; and to serve and shape the musical, cultural, and educational interests of the people of Vallejo and Solano County. The VSO engages guest artists of national and international renown so Solano County residents can enjoy them in live performance. The VSO sends its musicians to perform in public schools so children may experience and learn about live classical music.

The Vallejo Symphony, seventh oldest symphony orchestra in California, traces its roots to the early days of the Great Depression, when a small group of community leaders determined that local musicians needed a showcase for their talents and that other members of the community would be enriched by attending live performances of timeless music. On February 21, 1931, a 60-piece orchestra conducted by Julius Weyland made its debut in the auditorium of the city's newly dedicated Veterans Memorial Building. Concerts were presented throughout the decade with Mr. Weyland and George Trombley conducting the orchestra during these formative years.

Activity lessened, then ceased during World War II until 1946, when the Vallejo Symphony was revitalized under the auspices of the Vallejo Recreation District and the Adult Education Department. Dr. Orley See became its conductor at that time. In 1951, Virl M. Swan took the conductor's baton to lead the orchestra until 1961, when Dr. George Wargo began his 21-year career as music director and conductor. The sixties saw the independence of the orchestra established, a subscription concert series launched, and supportive fundraising activities begun by the Symphony Association's board of directors. During the following decade, artistic goals for the orchestra were set, and an annual Major Gifts Campaign was established to support a professional orchestra and expand the concert season.

The 1980s saw a dramatic improvement in the quality of the orchestra and programming

when David Ramadanoff, a former associate conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and winner of the 1980 Leopold Stokowski Conducting Award, accepted the position of music director and conductor. Under his dynamic leadership, the Vallejo Symphony has developed into an urban orchestra of regional importance, attracting some of the finest musicians in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1983 the VSO became completely professional. In 1993 the orchestra visited Vallejo's sister city of Akashi, Japan. In 1997 the VSO hosted the West Coast premiere of Hannibal's concert opera ''African Portraits.'' Hannibal spent the week in Vallejo public schools with students.

The Vallejo Symphony now performs a four-concert subscription season and an annual Summer Pops concert each Fourth of July. As part of its commitment to the musical experience of Solano County's children, the orchestra performs youth concerts for the elementary school children of Vallejo, and presents its popular series of intimate, entertaining and educational mini-concerts in elementary schools throughout the county.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we recognize the Vallejo Symphony Orchestra for its many contributions to the Vallejo community and wish its members many more years of outstanding performances.

REMARKS ON THE DEATH OF SHAMIL BASAYEV

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on July 10, 2006, one of the world's greatest terrorists, Shamil Basayev was killed during a special operation by Russian Security Services. Basayev represented the radical aspect of the Chechen rebel movement. The movement began as a secular fight for independence and has become overrun by Islamic extremists. Russia claims that Basayev's efforts have now been supported by international terror networks like al-Qaeda.

For more than 10 years, Basayev, designated as a terrorist by both the United States and the United Nations, was the mastermind behind the most horrific attacks on the Russian people. His reign of terror includes the seizure of a hospital in Budyonnovsk in southern Russia in 1995 that killed approximately 100. He attacked a theater in Moscow in 2002 where dozens of hostages died. And most tragically and horrific in its cowardice, he abducted a school in Beslan in 2004, where 331 people died, more than half of them schoolchildren.

Basayev was set to strike again, but the Russian government stopped him in his tracks. Russian security officials engaged in a special operation that used information gained from tracking weapons and explosive shipments from abroad. They linked this information to plans for a terrorist attack in southern Russia intended to coincide with a meeting of the Group of 8 leaders.

Before his death, in his last known statement in public, Basayev was said to express ''great thankfulness'' for the insurgents in Iraq who killed 5 Russian diplomats.

Terrorism is an affront to civilized people the world over. We in New York and the United States know the bloody price of terrorism. This represents a small victory in the global war on terrorism. Civilized society cannot rest until terrorism is stamped out once and for all.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SANCTUARY OF ROANOKE, ALABAMA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition to the First United Methodist Church of Roanoke, Alabama, which is celebrating the 100th anniversary of their sanctuary on October 1, 2006.

In 1836, the Randolph Mission was created and serves today as the earliest recording of a place for Methodists to worship in Roanoke. In 1870, the church joined the newly organized North Alabama Conference. The First United Methodist Church of Roanoke continues to be a part of the conference today.

From 1906 to 1908, George Stoves served as pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Roanoke during a rapid period of growth in the town and during construction of their present church. Stoves is recognized for designing the beautiful building.

The celebration will include opening the corner stone, memorializing a newly renovated kitchen, and paying off the mortgage of their family life center.

I salute the members of the First United Methodist Church of Roanoke, Alabama, for reaching this important milestone in the history of Roanoke, and congratulate the church family on their sanctuary's 100th anniversary.

IN HONOR OF EMILY STUART

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Emily Stuart. Throughout her lifetime, Mrs. Stuart brightened the lives of family and friends in the community of Parma, Ohio.

As a kind and active citizen, Mrs. Stuart played an integral role in local politics. She was a member of the Parma Democratic Club and the Woman's Democratic Club. Mrs. Stuart revolutionized the process of communication between constituents by devising a system of post cards to collect contact information. In addition, she spent countless hours making phone calls and posting yard signs for local politicians. During her involvement in local politics, she herself rose to the ranks of precinct committeewoman; a position she maintained for more than 20 years.

But Mrs. Stuart is not just an integral part of Parma politics. From her home on Harold Avenue, she has enjoyed 43 years of marriage to her loving husband, Joe Stuart. Together they became involved in committees and clubs across northeast Ohio. Her brothers, Edward and Stephen Mazur and sister Janice Warner along with many nieces and nephews are among the many family members touched by Mrs. Stuart's delightful stories and laughter.

While the world changed dramatically over the course of Mrs. Stuart's lifetime, she believed in maintaining the traditions of her Polish ancestry. Mrs. Stuart contributed to the culture of Parma by joining the Polish Legion of American Veterans. Close friends say she welcomed any and every opportunity to speak her native language.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in celebrating the life of Emily Stuart; a beloved family member and friend. Over the years, her dedication to service brought joy to the lives of so many, including mine.

INTRODUCTION OF ''RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILIZATION CIVILIAN MANAGEMENT ACT''

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, today, Mr. SAXTON and I are pleased to introduce the House companion bill to S. 3322, the Lugar-Biden bill, ''Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act,'' that unanimously passed the Senate in May 2006.

According to the Defense Science Board, since the end of the cold war, the U.S. has begun stabilization and reconstruction operation once every 18–24 months. This frequency of engagement reflects the reality that U.S. national security is more threaten by failing and ungoverned states than traditional threats. We only have to look to Afghanistan and southern Lebanon to see the far-reaching consequences of ungoverned territory.

The complexities of failed states cannot be dealt with by military solution alone. Combating failed states requires a complex combination of political, diplomatic, development assistance and military actions, as well as the ability to respond quickly in the immediate aftermath of crisis. The military plays an extremely important role in stabilizing a country, but civilians play an equally important role and have comparative advantage in helping to develop civil society—judicial systems, law enforcement, health care, economic development, trade promotion and other essential sectors to stabilize a country.

The Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act would lay the legislative framework for authorizing this integral civilian capacity. Specifically, the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act would:

Authorize the establishment of the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, S/CRS, and expenditures for a Crisis Response Fund for a Conflict Response Corps, and for educational, training, planning and operational capacity for S/CRS.

Authorize the establishment of a 250 person Civilian Response Corps with both Active-Duty and Reserve components. The corps, made up of both State Department and USAID employees, could be rapidly deployed with the military for both initial assessments and operational purposes. They would be the first civilian team on the ground in post-conflict situations, well in advance of the establishment of an embassy.

Seek to establish personnel exchange programs with other federal agencies designed to enhance stabilization and reconstruction capacity.

Importantly, the bill promotes a stabilization and reconstruction curriculum and the utilization of already existing programs like the Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important piece of legislation that would greatly assist in improving the capacity of our government to respond to some of the most important and pressing security threats of our time.

SIKHS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan recently published an open letter showing that the effort to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation is closer than ever to success. It took note of the speeches and the raising of the flag in support of Khalistan, of the seminar that was given that promoted Khalistan, and numerous other activities that have moved forward the peaceful effort to liberate Khalistan.

The letter argues that Khalistan is the only issue facing the Sikhs. It cites examples of people living in tyranny who put their differences aside to oust the tyrants and urges the Sikh nation to learn from those examples and do the same. It calls on the political leaders in Punjab, Khalistan, to focus their attention on the issue of liberating Khalistan from Indian occupation rather than the lesser issues that so often command their attention.

I recommend this letter highly, Mr. Speaker. It provides an excellent overview of the situation in Punjab, Khalistan.

Mr. Speaker, we must do our part to ensure freedom to the people of Khalistan and all the oppressed people of south Asia and the world. This is critical if we are proclaiming the American values of freedom, democracy, and human rights, which are cornerstones of American foreign policy. In pursuit of that goal, we should end our aid to India and our trade with India until it respects the basic human rights of all people under its control, treating them fairly, equally, and with dignity. And we should actively support democracy for the people of Khalistan and all the occupied nations, such as Kashmir, Nagalim, and others, in the form of democracy and self-determination. They should have a free and fair vote on their status, the democratic way. Does India have a problem with democracy for the people it rules? If so, it is not worthy of our support.

I would like to put the Council of Khalistan's open letter into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues and the American people.

SIKH LEADERSHIP MUST UNITE TO FREE KHALISTAN

AUGUST 14, 2006.

DEAR KHALSA JI: As I write this letter, we are again approaching Indian Independence Day. Although it is a celebration for the uppercaste Hindus, it is a black day on the calendar for Sikhs and other minorities suffering under the boot of Indian repression. Over 52,000 of our Sikh brothers and sisters remain in illegal Indian custody as political prisoners without charge or trial. More than a quarter of a million of our fellow Sikhs have been murdered by the Indian government. Similar genocide has been inflicted on Christians, Muslims, and other minorities. Is this what India celebrates? Are they celebrating bloodshed, violence, brutality, and tyranny? Unfortunately, that is the way it looks. How does a democracy justify that kind of celebration?

The flame of freedom continues to burn brightly in the heart of the Sikh Nation. No force can suppress it. The arrests last year and earlier this year of Sikh activists, mostly from Dal Khalsa, merely for raising the Khalistani flag and making pro-Khalistan speeches shows that the movement to free our homeland is on the rise. It has gotten the attention of the world. The seminar organized by former Member of Parliament Sardar Atinder Pal Singh, who has publicly asked why we can't have Khalistan, also moved the cause of freedom for Khalistan forward. We are closer to freedom than ever before, despite the ongoing repression.

Recently, a coalition of Sikh leaders led by Simranjit Singh Mann has come together to oppose both Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and Parkash Singh Badal. While it is good to oppose both of these leaders, who are puppets of the brutal Indian regime, the small, incremental proposals that the Mann-led coalition is making do little to solve the basic problems of the Sikh Nation. The real issue is Khalistan. That is why these 35 Sikhs face charges from the Indian government for raising the Khalistani flag and speaking for Khalistan, not merely for opposition to Badal and Amarinder. As worthwhile as it may be to oppose them, it is diverting the attention of the Sikh Nation from the real issue of Khalistan.

India is trying to subvert Khalistan's independence by overrunning Punjab with non-Sikhs while keeping Sikhs from escaping the brutal repression in Punjab. We must redouble our efforts to free our homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. That is the only way to keep these atrocities from continuing and to protect the Sikh Nation. This is a direct challenge to the Sikh leadership, irrespective of their party affiliation. Yet the new coalition wants to practice politics as usual, within the Indian system. That will never achieve freedom, dignity, security, or prosperity for the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan. They must speak out forcefully for Khalistan or their efforts are useless. Please do not waste the Sikh Nation's time on other issues that divert our attention from liberating Khalistan. Those issues can and should be dealt with after Khalistan is free. But until then, no other issue matters to the future of the Khalsa Panth.

Other nations that have faced repression have taught us the lesson that these politicians need to learn. When Nicaragua suffered under a repressive government in the 1980s, the opposition factions put aside their differences and worked together to free the people from the repression of the Ortega regime. A similar thing is happening in other countries around the world today. They know that these differences, as important as they may be, are for a later day. First, they must secure freedom.

Any organization that sincerely supports Khalistan deserves the support of the Sikh Nation. However, the Sikh Nation needs leadership that is honest, sincere, consistent, and dedicated to the cause of Sikh freedom. But we should only support sincere, dedicated, honest leaders. The Council of Khalistan has stood strongly and consistently for liberating our homeland, Khalistan, from Indian occupation. For over 20 years we have led this fight while others were trying to divert the resources and the attention of the Sikh Nation away from the issue of freedom in a sovereign, independent Khalistan.

Mr. Mann is not trustworthy. He is conniving with the Indian government. His letter pledging support for ''the constitution and territorial integrity of India'' is reproduced on page 185 of Chakravyuh: Web of Indian Secularism. Last year, he was escorted around America by Amarjit Singh. At a Vaisakhi celebration in New York in 2000, he called for the Council of Khalistan office to be closed. He has accused Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon and me of being Indian government agents!

All factions of the Akali Dal are to be viewed with suspicion. The Akali Dal has lost all its credibility. The Akali Dal conspired with the Indian government in 1984 to invade the Golden Temple to murder Sant Bhindranwale and 20,000 other Sikh during June 1984 in Punjab. If Sikhs will not even protect the sanctity of the Golden Temple, how can the Sikh Nation survive as a nation?

The Akali leaders also walked out when I predicted at a seminar around the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday that Khalistan will soon be free, a prediction that was greeted with multiple enthusiastic shouts of ''Khalistan Zindabad.'' How will these Akalis account for themselves? Remember the words of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Professor Darshan Singh: ''If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh.'' Khalistan is the only way that Sikhs will be able to live in freedom, peace, prosperity, and dignity. It is time to start a Shantmai Morcha to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation.

Never forget that the Akal Takht Sahib and Darbar Sahib are under the control of the Indian government, the same Indian government that has murdered over a quarter of a million Sikhs in the past twenty years. These institutions will remain under the control of the Indian regime until we free the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan, from Indian occupation and oppression and sever our relations with the New Delhi government.

The Sikhs in Punjab have suffered enormous repression at the hands of the Indian regime in the last 25 years. Over 50,000 Sikh youth were picked up from their houses, tortured, murdered in police custody, then secretly cremated as ''unidentified bodies.'' Their remains were never even given to their families! More than a quarter of a million Sikhs have been murdered at the hands of the Indian government. Another 52,268 are being held as political prisoners. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984! Even now, the capital of Punjab, Chandigarh, has not been handed over to Punjab, but remains a Union Territory. How can Sikhs have any freedom living under a government that would do these things?

Sikhs will never get any justice from Delhi. Ever since independence, India has mistreated the Sikh Nation, starting with Patel's memo labelling Sikhs ''a criminal tribe.'' Wbat a shame for Home Minister Patel and the Indian government to issue this memorandum when the Sikh Nation gave over 80 percent of the sacrifices to free India.

How can Sikhs continue to live in such a country? There is no place for Sikhs in supposedly secular, supposedly democratic India. Let us work to make certain that 2006 is the Sikh Nation's most blessed year by making sure it is the year that we shake ourselves loose from the yoke of Indian oppression and liberate our homeland, Khalistan,

so that all Sikhs may live lives of prosperity, freedom, and dignity.

Sincerely,

GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JORDAN APPLEHANS

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Ms. Jordan Applehans of Parker, Colorado. Ms. Applehans has been accepted to the People to People World Leadership Forum here in our Nation's Capital. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the People to People program founded by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Ms. Applehans has displayed academic excellence, community involvement and leadership potential. All students chosen for the program have been identified and nominated by educators.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in paying tribute to Jordan Applehans, and wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO BERNICE KING-HILL

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it was with deep sadness that I learned of the passing of Mrs. Bernice King-Hill on July 18, 2006. For more than 30 years Bernice "Bea" King-Hill faithfully served the community of her church and the city of Richmond, California. For her church group, Mrs. Hill was a social worker and teacher of great capacity and compassion. For the people of Richmond and Contra Costa County, she was a dedicated leader who gave of herself to the community with sincerity, commitment, and strength.

Bernice Hill was born on August 31, 1924, in Mobile, Alabama, and raised, along with her four siblings and their nine cousins, by the late Joe West and Georgia King-West. For her advanced degree, Mrs. Hill attended the Nannie H. Burroughs Religious School in Washington, DC, and the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. By 1955, Mrs. Hill had moved to Oakland, California, in the San Francisco Bay Area and begun what was to be a 30-year career of service. Since 1955, Mrs. Hill worked for our community in the various capacities of service, education, non-profit work, administration, and religious counsel.

For 5 years, Mrs. Hill owned and operated B-Nolas Fine Foods which served the schools and the medical centers in the community of Berkeley. Since then, Mrs. Hill held many different positions within the community beginning with her work as founder and director of the non-profit Senior Extension Center in Richmond, California. She was also a manager for the Contra Costa County nutrition program for several years during this period. Mrs. Hill served on the Advisory Council for Aging as well as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Ladies Auxiliary, 761st Tank Battalion, Post 8399, for which she was the president.

More recently, Bernice Hill served on the Board of Children's Council in Richmond, California, and as the Administrative Assistant to Senior Legislators of California under Carolyn Ashe Stokes. Mrs. Hill was also the Chairperson of the Progressive District Association and Senior Citizen Department as well as a teacher for the California State Baptist Convention.

During these many years, Mrs. Hill pursued her religious service with the same devotion and selflessness that marked her professional work. Her service to the religious community at the Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church included passionate and dedicated work as a teacher for the church's Sunday School, the Baptist Training Union, and the Ester Circle of the General Missionary Society.

Throughout her many years of service to the people of our district, Mrs. Hill maintained her direction and independence. She was hard-working with a unique honesty and heart yet she was never afraid to challenge those who sought to exploit her or her effort. She believed in self-responsibility and forgiveness and she not only built her work on these values, but also inspired them in others. Her god-daughters Leona Sims and Nola Pyle are fine examples of her commitment and integrity. Her home will go to the Senior Extension Center to continue her legacy.

To Bernice Hill's family and friends, I extend my heartfelt condolences. Their loss is shared not only by those who knew Mrs. Hill but also by all those who have been touched by the work she has done. We will be forever grateful for the courage, compassion, and integrity with which she sought to make our community, and our country, a better place for all of us. We are so grateful to Mrs. Hill's family and church for sharing her with us for so many years.

REMARKS ON CONDEMNING THE ACTIONS OF THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM (LTTE)

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on June 26, 2006, a homicide bomber drove his explosive-laden motorcycle into a car carrying Major General Parami Kulatunga, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Army, killing him instantly. While they deny responsibility, this act mirrors many terrorist attacks carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

This is another unfortunate event in the constant struggle between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE. Sri Lanka and the United States share a good friendship, with Sri Lanka as Asia's oldest democracy. While on the other hand, the LTTE is a group that the Secretary of State has designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

One possible step in mitigating this violence is for the Government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers to renegotiate a cease-fire agreement. This must be done in a successful manner so the hostilities do not resume. However, with the LTTE's refusal to renounce violence, this peace process is constantly in jeopardy. Tragically, the number of violent acts the LTTE has committed since the peace agreement with Government of Sri Lanka has only increased.

While it has been the United State's policy to encourage peace through negotiation, if the violence continues, the State Department should consider taking more aggressive steps in aiding the Government of Sri Lanka's fight against the LTTE. It is in the interest of the United States to ensure that the LTTE renounces violence, primarily so all Sri Lankans can live in peace, but also so the LTTE's reign of terror does not spread. Reports have indicated that the LTTE had ties with al Qaeda. Furthermore, the LTTE has at least a dozen oceangoing vessels with which they have honed waterborne terrorist tactics not unlike what occurred with the USS *Cole* bombing.

The Government of Sri Lanka is a friend to the United States, and I stand by the commitment to ensure that friendship lasts well into the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF GARY E. HARVEY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay tribute to Mr. Gary E. Harvey, a constituent of mine who has dedicated his life to serving our Nation in uniform. Mr. Harvey was born and raised in Windsor, Ontario, and served from 1958 to 1961 as a member of the Royal Canadian Armored Corps. In May 1961, Mr. Harvey enlisted in the United States Army and was commissioned at the Infantry Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1965.

Mr. Harvey has served two tours in Vietnam. He has also worked as Executive Officer at the Anniston Army Depot; Assistant Professor of Military Science at Marion Military Institute; Operations Officer at the U.S. Army Chemical School; and Deputy Director and Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization, Security and Reserve Component Support and Base Transition Coordinator at Fort McClellan in Alabama.

Mr. Harvey has received numerous awards and decorations including the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device with three oak leaf clusters, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, and Vietnam Campaign Medal with five campaign stars.

I salute Mr. Harvey for his continued efforts today to help serve and protect our country, and for proudly serving our Nation for the past 45 years.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF RAMON TORRES

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute and recognition of Ramon A. Torres upon retiring from his position as Executive Director of the Multilingual Multicultural Education Office in Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Torres was raised in Coamo, Puerto Rico where he attended the Barrio Pedro Garcia School from kindergarten to seventh grade. At age 11, he moved to Cleveland to join family members and attend St. Augustine Elementary School. With limited proficiency in English, Mr. Torres overcame many challenges in order to assimilate to life in the United States. His hard work and perseverance enabled him to attend Cleveland State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in Education and a Masters of Education in Secondary School Administration and Supervision.

During his career as an educator, Mr. Torres served and inspired students in the Cleveland Public Schools for 29 years. In the community, Mr. Torres assumed responsibilities such as Project Manager and Education Teacher Consultant of Bilingual Education Programs and Latin American Cultures. Mr. Torres also served as President of Woodmen of the World Fraternal Lodge and on the Hispanic Steering Council at Cuyahoga Community College.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Ramon A. Torres. After making many notable contributions to education and the community, may he enjoy a peaceful and rewarding retirement.

DAL KHALSA USA HOLDS SEMINAR ON KHALISTAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, recently, Dal Khalsa USA held a seminar in support of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland. It was a significant demonstration of the continuing support that the Sikh people have for freedom for their homeland. Paramjit Singh Sekhon and Gagandecp Singh, who lead Dal Khalsa USA and organized the seminar, are to be congratulated. Speakers, included Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon, Dr. Ajit Pal Singh Sandhu, and Dr. Arjinder Singh Sekhorn.

Freedom is a dream that people all over the world share and we should be encouraging it, Mr. Speaker. Both here and in Punjab, support for Khalistan is on the rise and getting more visible.

As the beacon of liberty in the world, it is our duty to encourage people who are reaching for freedom. The essence of democracy is the right to self-determination. But in India, all that elections do for minorities is to change the faces of the oppressors. The time has come to go on record in support of a democratic vote on freedom for Khalistan, Kashmir, Nagaland, and all the minority nations of South Asia. And we should stop our aid to India and our trade until human rights are respected.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan issued a press release on the seminar. I would like to add it to the RECORD.

DAL KHALSA USA HOLDS SEMINAR ON KHALISTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Dal Khalsa USA held a seminar on Khalistan In Fremont, California from August 25 to August 27, The seminar focused on the need to liberate Khalistan, the Sikh homeland, from Indian occupation. Khalistan is the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. Speakers included Dr. Gurmit Singh aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon, Managing Editor of the International Journal of Sikh Affairs, Dr. Ajit Pal Singh Sandhu, Colonel Arjinderpal Singh Sekhon (US Army Reserve), and others, The seminar was organized by Sardar Paramjit Singh Sekhon, President of Dal Khalsa USA, and Sardar Gagandeep Singh, General Secretary of Dal Khalsa USA.

The speakers addressed the need for the Sikh Nation to reclaim it lost sovereignty and escape from the oppression of the Indian government, which has murdered over 250,000 Sikh infants, children, youth, men, women, and elderly since 1984, as well as more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 90,000 Muslims in Kashmir, tens of thousands of Christians and Muslims throughout the country, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipurls, Tamils, and other minorities.

Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated. Khalra was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family. No one has been brought to Justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra. The only witness to the Khalra kidnapping, Rajiv Singh Randhawa, has been repeatedly harassed by the police, including having been arrested for trying to hand a piece of paper to then-British Home Secretary Jack Straw. The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him. He has never been tried for the Jathedar Kaunke murder. In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government had paid over 41,000 cash bounties for killing Sikhs. A report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) quotes the Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing ''if we add up the figures of the last few years the number of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]'' The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian governments murders of Sikhs ''worse than a genocide.''

The MASR report states that 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial, mostly under a repressive law known as the ''Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act'' (TADA), which expired in 1995. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984. There has been no list published of those who were acquitted under TADA and those who are still rotting in Indian jails. Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. Last year, 35 Sikhs were charged and arrested in Punjab for making speeches in support of Khalistan and raising the Khalistan flag. ''How can making speeches and raising a flag be considered crimes in a democratic society?'' asked Dr. Aulakh.

Missionary Graham Staines was murdered along with his two sons, ages 8 and 10, by a mob of militant, fundamentalist Hindu nationalists who set fire to the jeep, surrounded it, and chanted ''Victory to Hannuman,'' a Hindu god. Missionary Joseph Cooper was beaten so badly that he had to spend a week in an Indian hospital. Then the Indian government threw him out of the country. None of the people involved has been tried. The persons who have murdered priests, raped nuns, and burned Christian churches have not been charged or tried. Police broke up a Christian religious festival with gunfire. Recently, militant Hindus from the Bharatlya Janata Yuva (a youth movement affiliated with the BJP and the Fascist RSS) attacked the Convent of Loreto and the school there. 13 Catholic schools remain closed and a spokesman for the BJP, Mr. H. Dikshit, demanded an investigation of the school!

The murderers of 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat have never been brought to trial. An Indian newspaper reported that the police were ordered not to get involved in that massacre, a frightening parallel to the Delhi massacre of Sikhs In 1984. The most important mosque in India, the Sabri Mosque, was destroyed by militant Hindu fundamentalists who have never been held responsible for their actions.

''I am honored to be a speaker at this seminar and very pleased that Dal Khalsa USA is holding these activities to focus the attention of America and the world on the plight of the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan and the need for a sovereign, Independent Khalistan,'' said Dr. Aulakh.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia. Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. Currently, there are 17 freedom movements within India's borders. It has 18 official languages. ''We hope that India's breakup will be peaceful like Czechoslovakia's, not violent like Yugoslavia's,'' Dr. Aulakh said.

Dr. Aulakh stressed his commitment to the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent struggle to liberate Khalistan. ''The only way that the repression will stop and Sikhs will live in freedom, dignity and prosperity is to liberate Khalistan,'' said Dr. Aulakh. ''As Professor Darshan Singh, former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh Is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh.','' Dr. Aulakh said. ''We must free Khalistan now,''

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SHELBY INGLE

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Ms. Shelby Ingle of Centennial, Colorado. Ms. Ingle has been accepted to the People to People World Leadership Forum here in our Nation's Capital. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the People to People program founded by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Ms. Ingle has displayed academic excellence, community involvement and leadership potential. All students chosen for the program have been identified and nominated by educators.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in paying tribute to Shelby Ingle, and wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE WAKE OF THE MUMBAI TERRORIST BOMBINGS

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on July 11, 2006 seven separate bombs were detonated throughout the train network in India's cultural capital, the city of Mumbai. More than 180 people were killed, and over 900 were injured. The bombs exploded simultaneously during the evening rush hour resulting in an entire shut down of the rail network which stranded hundreds of thousands of commuters. The terrorists may have hit a target with high practical and psychological impact, but I am confident that the people of India will again stand tall and not relent to such senseless and unfathomable violence.

Following the attacks, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh described the incidents as a ''shocking and cowardly attempt to spread a feeling of hatred.'' Even Pakistani leaders condemned the blasts as a ''despicable act of terrorism.''

The tragedy continued even after the bombing, with an eyewitness reporting that some of the dazed survivors who had jumped from the train after the blast were run over by another train coming in the opposite direction.

Undoubtedly, the hospitals in Mumbai were swamped with casualties.

Many parallels can be drawn between Mumbai and New York City. Mumbai is home to 17 million people, and is headquarters to many big Indian companies and foreign multinationals, with property prices among the most expensive in the world. Both Mumbai and New York have been attacked more than once by terrorists. In 1993 New York saw the first bombing of the World Trade Center, and in the same year 250 people were killed in Mumbai from bombings throughout the city.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to remind the people of India, as partners in a civilized world, America will not stand for senseless terrorism and together we can fight this evil until it no longer impedes the advancement of society.

PROVIDING FOR EARMARKING REFORM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H. Res. 1003, a rule providing that, upon its adoption, H. Res. 1000, providing for earmarking reform in the House of Representatives is hereby adopted.

Mr. Speaker, today we are considering an important reform that members of both parties have supported. In fact, it was a key provision in the House-passed Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act. Specifically, with this new rule, member-directed spending to projects in their district, or earmarks, will no longer be anonymous.

As it stands now, there are no disclosure requirements for earmarks in appropriations, tax and authorizing legislation. Earmarks can be buried in the text of bills that often number into the thousands of pages. There is no easy way to account for how many earmarks are in a bill and who is sponsoring them.

This new rule requires sponsors of earmarks to be listed in committee reports. Conference reports must also have a list of earmarks that are ''airdropped'' into the agreement.

We are blowing away the fog of anonymity so the public can have a clear picture of what the projects are, how much they cost and who is sponsoring them. This is a victory for fiscal responsibility and a victory for spending taxpayer dollars wisely.

As an enforcement mechanism, this new rule also provides for a question of consideration when a bill or conference report does not contain a list of earmarks. The question of consideration is debatable for 30 minutes—15 minutes equally divided.

If a Member feels strongly enough about a proposed earmark, they will have to attach their name to it. And they need to be prepared to make their case in full view of their colleagues and constituents.

Mr. Speaker, while the report to accompany H. Res. 1000 addresed several issues regarding the implementation of this new rule, I believe that it is important to further clarify how this rule will operate after its adoption.

First, this rule will become effective immediately upon its adoption. Any report filed by a committee from that point forward should address this new rule. If there are earmarks in the bill or report, they should be listed appropriately; if there are none, I would encourage the committee chairmen to include a statement to that effect, as is often the current practice with other reporting requirements under rule XIII.

Secondly, with regard to measures in conference, we recognize that the exact requirments of the resolution may be problematic given that this rule was not in place at the point of House consideration. We believe that it is important that committee chairmen make a good faith effort to comply with the spirit of the rule, and would regard inclusion of a list of earmarks which were not in either the House or Senate bill or their accompanying reports, i.e. ''airdropped'' earmarks, as meeting the intent of this new rule.

Mr. Speaker, the earmark reform will build on the reforms already being implemented by the Appropriations Committee—reforms that have reduced the number of earmarks this year by 37 percent. Overall, spending on member projects was reduced $7.8 billion below last year. Over the last 2 years, Member project spending has decreased by over $10 billion.

I want to thank Chairman LEWIS and the Appropriations Committee for making significant progress in reining-in government spending.

I also want to make very clear that our focus is not solely on appropriations. For the reform to be effective, it must be comprehensive, and that was the commitment made by Speaker HASTERT and the leadership of the House. So let me point out that this earmark reform applies across the board. It does not just apply to some committees. It covers all committees and all appropriations, tax and authorizing legislation that moves through regular order.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken great care to clearly and precisely state what constitutes a tax, an appropriations and an authorizing earmark. And the good news is that there is more agreement than disagreement on these definitions. Yet clearly, there's no magic bullet. There is not going to be one definition that will be perfect and please everybody. But at the end of the day, we have to come together and move this process forward. If there's an earmark in a bill, it belongs on a list. It's just that simple.

Now, is this new disclosure going to completely end the practice of earmarking? No. But it will shine a spotlight on earmarks without grinding the legislative process to a halt.

And let me make very clear that the larger goal of this new rule is to make a profound and lasting change in how this institution handles earmarks and spends taxpayer dollars. The goal is to increase transparency and accountability. And the goal is to pull back the curtain on earmarks for the public, who have every right to know.

For this earmark reform to be both meaningful and lasting, everyone, from commttee chairman on down, must make a good faith effort to comply with the spirit of the new rule. Our leadership—and certainly the Rules Committee—has made such a commitment. We are determined to make this work.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to point out that while this is an important milestone on the path toward reform, we have not reached the goal-line. Reform is a continuous process. It gains momentum from members who never let up and never settle for the status quo. I urge my colleagues to vote yes for reforming earmarks and yes to setting the stage for more reforms down the road.

RECOGNIZING GLORIA R. RODRIGUEZ

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Gloria R. Rodriguez. As a health care professional for over 27 years, Ms. Rodriguez has spent much of her career working to eliminate health disparities in minority and disadvantaged communities. Currently, Ms. Rodriguez serves as the CEO of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC) which represents 43 health centers and clinics throughout the county.

Gloria was born in Culver City, California and raised in the San Fernando Valley. She attended San Jose State University where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Community Health Education. Ms. Rodriguez later received her Masters of Public Health degree in Public Policy and Administration at the University of Washington's School of Public Health and Community Medicine.

Ms. Rodriguez spent much of her career working with various community health-related organizations in Washington State. She served as CEO for the Washington Association of Community & Migrant Health Centers (W ACMHC), the State's primary care trade/membership association, and founded the Alliance for Multi-Cultural Health in Tacoma. She also served as the Assistant Director for the

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries and CEO of the Washington Association of Community & Migrant Health Centers. In each of these capacities, Ms. Rodriguez focused on capacity building, community development and workforce development as means to eliminate healthcare disparities in minority and disadvantaged communities. She also worked to bridge the gap between health care providers and the communities they serve.

Beyond her involvement in community health organizations, Ms. Rodriguez has 15 years experience in direct patient care in a wide range of roles, including cardiology technician, medical assistant, pharmacy technician, and lab technician. She has also worked as a health care educator and has served on a vast array of board and task forces.

Ms. Rodriguez's dedication to eliminating health disparities and providing quality health care services to her community is both admirable and inspiring. I am proud to recognize Ms. Rodriguez and her many accomplishments and wish her the best as she continues to serve the community.

TRIBUTE TO COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR JAMES HAROLD CHENEY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to recognize Command Sergeant Major James Harold Cheney, United States Army, as he completes a distinguished tour of duty in the United States Army.

Command Sergeant Major (CSM) James H. Cheney entered the United States Army on September 8, 1976, at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since joining the U.S. Army, CSM Cheney has completed tours of duty at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri (on five occasions); Fort Rucker, Alabama; Camp Indian, Korea; Fort Lewis, Washington; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and Vilseck, Germany. Throughout his military career, CSM Cheney has served the White House Communications Agency where he was the NCOIC of the fabrications department and the Office of the Chief of Engineers at the Pentagon where he fulfilled the responsibilities as the Office of the Chief of Engineer Sergeant Major.

Additionally, CSM Cheney has been recognized for his service to the United States Army having held every Noncommissioned Officer leadership position culminating as the United States Army Garrison, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Garrison Command Sergeant Major.

Highly respected within the Army leadership, CSM Cheney has been awarded the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal. CSM Cheney has also received the Drill Sergeant Badge, the Jungle Expert Badge, the Army Staff Badge, and the Presidential Service Badge. The aforementioned awards and decorations are just a few of the many that CSM Cheney has been given.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to pay tribute to Command Sergeant Major James H. Cheney. I know my colleagues join me in thanking him for his service to his country and in wishing him well as he concludes his tour of duty with the United States Army.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHAMPTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise in honor of a proud and long-serving institution of my district—on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Southampton Fire Department's creation last Saturday, September 9th. I was honored to participate in this celebration, which included a parade of fire trucks and culminated with the anniversary gala at the Hampton Road Firehouse.

I am privileged to represent the Village of Southampton, New York. A common thread runs through the town's rich history—an all volunteer force that has served and responded bravely since the first firefighters in Southampton consisted of bucket brigades whose fire alarms were sounded by the village blacksmith banging on his rim.

The first company that constitutes today's fire department was the Agawam Engine Company. Founded in 1881, it was widely known for the 415–pound bell used to alert the firefighters and the handpumping hose cart they used to extinguished fires. Like many Long Island families who can proudly claim that generations served as the department, one of my ancestors, James H. Bishop, was a founding member of Agawam Company, and my great grandfather, Benjamin Bishop, later served as its chief between 1893 and 1897.

Since that time, more dangerous fires started by complex fuels and as a result of eastern Long Island's booming population have intensified the demands on the 143 current members of the Agawam Engine, Agawam Hose, Southampton Hook and Ladder, Southampton Fire Patrol, and Southampton Hose Companies. Still, they remain an all-volunteer and highly skilled force whose frequent feats of heroism and selfless dedication remind us of the firefighters who gave their lives at the World Trade Center as we observed the solemn occasion of the fifth anniversary of the September 11th attacks.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in thanking those firefighters who continue to protect our families and communities, and extend our deepest gratitude to volunteers, like those intrepid men and women of the Southampton Fire Department, who risk their lives each day to keep us safe.

HONORING GUNNERY SGT. HAWLEY WALDRON

HON. JOHN E. SWEENEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor one of our Nation's true heroes, Gunnery Sgt. Hawley Waldron. A decorated and distinguished serviceman, Gunnery Sergeant Hawley Waldron was an inspiration to the men he fought with in the First World War, though not even those closest to him truly understood the extent of his valor. He was a resident of Saratoga County, and I am honored to represent members of the Waldron family who take great pride in Hawley's accomplishments.

Hawley led a selfless life, never speaking of the numerous accolades he received during the war, leaving his family to discover these achievements only after his passing in 1961. Gunnery Sgt. Waldron received several awards and medals during his service including the silver star along with two gold stars signifying three separate awards for valor. He also received two Croix de Guerre decorations given by the government of France for his service. He was decorated following the battle of Belleau Wood, in which he helped the Allied forces turn back the German army advancing on Paris and in doing so paved the way for Germany's ultimate defeat.

America's armed service men and women are held in the highest regard in this Nation and Hawley Waldron was one of our greatest. It is with great joy and respect that I commend the late Gunnery Sgt. Waldron for his accomplishments and the many distinguished honors he received over his 2 years of service in World War I. Our country is truly safer and honored to have had someone of the character, caliber, and courage of Gunnery Sgt. Hawley Waldron. I would like to offer the deepest gratitude on behalf of myself, the United States House of Representatives and all Americans for his dedication to our country.

HONORING DR. OLEH SHAMSHUR, UKRAINE'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Honorable Dr. Oleh Shamshur, Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States and extend a warm welcome to him as he visits Cleveland, Ohio to celebrate the Fifteenth Anniversary of Ukraine's Proclamation of Independence with leaders and members of our Ukrainian-American community.

For nearly 80 years, the United Ukrainian Organizations of Greater Cleveland have served as a vital coalition of historical and cultural significance, aimed at preserving and promoting all aspects of Ukrainian culture. These guardians of history have succeeded in keeping alive the rich traditions of their beloved homeland—from Ukraine's religious and social customs, to the artistic, history and world contributions that have left an indelible mark across the globe.

Following the fall of the Soviet Union and the rebirth of Ukrainian statehood, the United Ukrainian Organizations of Greater Cleveland bolstered fundraising and outreach efforts that extended from the shores of Lake Erie to the sands of the Black Sea. Additionally, this organization was instrumental in the creation of the

Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Here in Cleveland, the Ukrainian Museum-Archives is a monument to the struggles and triumphs of the people of the Ukraine and reflects the passion and dedication of the members of our Ukrainian community who seek to keep the stories, spirit, and history of the Ukraine alive by preserving cultural artifacts, advancements, historical documents. books and photographs to pass along to every new generation.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and welcome of Dr. Oleh Shamshur, Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States, along with the leaders and members, past and present, of the United Ukrainian Organizations of Greater Cleveland. Their vigilant determination to raise awareness of their struggle for liberty serves as a monument to all who have traveled to America seeking freedom and opportunity and reflects the vibrant fabric of diversity of our Cleveland community and our entire nation.

CONVENT ATTACKED IN INDIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on September 11, while we were observing the anniversary of a horrible terrorist attack on America, 13 Catholic schools were closed in Lucknow, India, after the Convent of Loreto, the school there, and the chapel were attacked by the violent Hindu organization the Bharatiya Janata Yuva, a youth arm of the BJP, which is part of the RSS, a Fascist organization that published a book on how to get minorities, including Christians, falsely implicated in criminal cases.

The spokesman for the BJP demanded a high-level inquiry into the school, according to the Tribune newspaper of Chandigarh, saying it engaged in ''irrational behavior.'' Apparently, being a Catholic is irrational behavior and ''unscientific activity'' in the world of Hindu militants.

Unforturlately, Mr. Speaker, this is not an isolated incident. There has been a wave of attacks against Christians. According to an article that appeared in the Journal of the London Institute of South Asia, some Christian boys were shot while praying. A mob of Hindus burned a missionary, Graham Staines, and his two sons (ages 8 and 10) to death and they have gotten away with it. Another missionary, Joseph Cooper, was severely beaten and then expelled from India. Christians have been arrested for sharing their religious beliefs. Violent Hindu Fascists have raped nuns, murdered priests, burned churches, and committed other acts of violence against Christians. More than 300,000 Christians have been killed by the Indians in Nagaland alone.

This would be bad enough if it were just Christians, Mr. Speaker, but, sadly, it is not. Sikhs, Muslims, and other minorities, such as Dalits, have been similarly repressed. The Muslims had their most revered mosque in India destroyed. Somewhere between 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were murdered in one pogrom in Gujarat. More than 90,000 have been killed in Kashmir. The government has murdered over a quarter of a million Sikhs. Their most sacred place of worship, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, which has been called the Sikh equivalent of the Vatican, was attacked in June 1984. Hundreds of people were brutally murdered there, and more than 20,000 were killed in the month of June 1984. More than 52,000 Sikhs are political prisoners in India. They have murdered human-rights activists for exposing their secret cremations, murdered religious leaders, murdered toddlers, and paid out more than 41,000 cash bounties to police officers who killed Sikhs.

I would like to thank Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh of the Council of Khalistan for bringing the Loreto attack to my attention.

Mr. Speaker, we are at war right now with Fascists using the cover of Islam. Many of us have criticisms of the war policies, but the recent anniversary of September 11 reminds us that we cannot let terrorists carry out their awful deeds with no consequences. So why do we refuse even to raise our voices against Fascists who use the cover of the Hindu religion and oppress and kill Christians, Muslims, Sikhs. and others? At the very least, Mr. Speaker, we should be willing to stop trading with India and cut off our aid, and we should stand for the principles that America represents by seeking a democratic solution to the repression in the form of a free and fair plebiscite on the status of Christian Nagaland, predominantly Sikh Khalistan, Kashmir, and the others who seek their freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the Council of Khalistan's press release on the Loreto attack in the RECORD.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN LUCKNOW CLOSED AFTER ATTACK ON CONVENT BY MILITANT HINDUS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Thirteen Catholic schools were closed today to protest vandalism on the premises of the Loreto Convent, according to the Tribune of Chandigarh. Among the schools that were closed is the Loreto School. Militant Hindus from the Bharatiya Janata Yuva (a youth movement affiliated with the Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) and the Fascist RSS) attacked the Convent of Loreto, Loreto Chapel, and the school there. A spokesman for the BJP, Mr. H. Dikshit, demanded an investigation of the school, saying that it encourages ''irrational behavior'' and ''unscientific activity.'' Mr. Dlkshit said that the state government is ''overreacting to breaking a few flower pots.''

The attacks are part of a pattern of violence against Christians that has been going on heavily since Christmas 1998, which is in line with similar tyranny against other minorities. Missionary Graham Staines was murdered along with his two sons, ages a and 10, by a mob of militant, fundamentalist Hindu nationalists who set fire to the jeep, surrounded it. and chanted ''Victory to Hannuman,'' a Hindu god. Missionary Joseph Cooper was beaten so badly that he had to spend a week in an Indian hospital. Then the Indian government threw him out of the country. None of the people involved has been tried. Several states have enacted anti-conversion laws, which in practice prevent anyone from converting to any religion except Hinduism. Such a law is being considered by the Lok Sabha, the national Parliament. Christians report that they have faced threats, physical attacks, and jail time for sharing their beliefs. The Rashtirya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu Fascist organization that is the parent organization of the BJP, published a booklet on how to implicate Christians and other minorities in false criminal cases. The people who have murdered priests, raped nuns, forced them to drink their own urine, and burned Christian churches have not been charged or tried. In 2002, the Associated Press reported an attack on a Catholic church on the outskirts of Bangalore in which several people were injured. The assailants threw stones at the church, then broke in, breaking furniture and smashing windows before attacking worshippers. Last year, two young Christian boys were shot at while they prayed. Police broke up a Christian religious festival with gunfire.

Sikhs and Muslims know the same repression that Christians have been experiencing lately. In June 1984, Indian forces invaded and desecrated the most sacred center and seat of the Sikh religion, the Golden Temple in Amrltsar, along with 37 other Gurdwaras throughout Punjab. Over 20,00 were killed. Several young Sikh boys were taken into the courtyard of the Darbar Sahib complex and asked if they supported Khalistan (the independent Sikh homeland.) When they answered with the Sikh religious statement. ''Bole So Nihal,'' they were summarily murdered. The Sikh holy scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, was shot full of bullet holes.

Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated. Khalra was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family. No one has been brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khaira. The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him. He has never been tried for the Jathedar Kaunke murder. In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government had paid over 41,000 cash bounties for killing Sikhs. A report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) quotes the Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing ''if we add up the figures of the last few years the number of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]'' The Indian Supreme Court cal[ed the Indian government's murders of Sikhs ''worse than a genocide.''

The MASR report states that 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial, mostly under a repressive law known as the ''Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act'' (TADA), which expired in 1995. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984! Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. Last year, 35 Sikhs were charged and arrested in Punjab for making speeches In support of Khalistan and raising the Khalistani flag.

The murderers of 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat have never been brought to trial. An Indian newspaper reported that the police were ordered not to get involved in that massacre, a frightening parallel to the Delhi massacre of Sikhs in 1984. The most important mosque in India. the Babri Mosque, was destroyed by militant Hindu fundamentalists who have never been held responsible for their actions.

''The attack on the Loreto Convent shows that minorities have no place in India's so-called democracy,'' said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, which leads the Sikh struggle for an independent Khalistan. Khalistan declared its independence on October 7, 1987. History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India

is not one country; It Is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. Currently, there are 17 freedom movements within India's borders. It has 18 official languages. ''The only way that the repression of Sikhs, Christians. Muslims, and other minorities will end is to liberate our homelands, such as Khalistan, Nagaland, Kashmir. and the rest, said Dr. Aulakh. ''As Professor Darshan Singh, former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh.','' Dr. Aulakh said. ''We must free Khalistan now.''

IN MEMORY OF ESTHER MARTINEZ

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart today to honor the memory of a very special New Mexican, Esther Martinez.

Esther Martinez is renowned for her work as an educator, author, and master storyteller. But it is her life story that is very unique.

Born in 1912, her grandson Matthew notes that Esther typically introduced herself by saying she was born the same year New Mexico became a State and the *Titanic* sank. As a young girl, she traveled by covered wagon with her grandparents from her home in the Ute Country of Colorado to what was then known as San Juan Pueblo, now Okay Owingeh.

After arriving at Okay Owingeh, Esther was sent to the Santa Fe Indian Boarding School, as a part of the Federal Government's efforts to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream society. There she was scolded and often punished for speaking Tewa, her native tongue. As a lonely young girl, Esther longed to hear the voices and stories of her grandparents.

Story telling in her native Tewa language would be Esther's greatest legacy. She dedicated herself to maintaining and preserving the various forms of the Tewa language. Among her Pueblo people Esther or Aunt Esther, as many called her, is best known for her storytelling, but also recognized for her linguistic and educational contributions.

Esther taught Tewa at the San Juan Day School and for more than 20 years served as the school's director of bilingual education.

She also published her stories and used them as learning tools in the classroom. As a master of the Tewa language, she compiled Tewa dictionaries in various dialects for the northern New Mexico Pueblos and also translated the New Testament into Tewa.

Last Thursday, Esther was in Washington, DC, where I had the privilege of helping present her with the Nation's highest honor for folk and traditional artists. At the age of 94, Esther was named a 2006 National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts. With members of her family in the audience, Esther rose to be honored and received a standing ovation for her life's work preserving her native Tewa language and traditions.

Tragically, while making her way back home from the airport Saturday evening, Esther was killed in a traffic accident. Two of her daughters traveling with her suffered injuries but survived the crash.

Our hearts weigh heavy with the news of Esther's tragic passing but her legacy will forever live in the contributions she made to our Nation as an educator, linguist, and master storyteller. Her greatest role, however, was as a mother of 10 and grandmother who was loved by many. Our deepest sympathies are with them today.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO TOM VELOZ

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in sadness today to honor the memory of my friend, Thomas Michael Veloz. A caring and charitable man who was a monumental presence in Santa Clarita, CA, Tom passed away on September 13, 2006, at the age of 69.

Born in New York in 1937, Tom moved to California with his family in the 1950's. He attended the University of Southern California and graduated with a degree in business finance and education in 1960. After graduating, Tom worked in his father's business, Aquafine Corporation. Eventually assuming the role of president, Tom made the company an international success and then began another thriving business, Ultra Violet Devices, Inc. He was well regarded by his peers who held him in high esteem for his leadership, honesty and integrity. Extremely astute and innovative, Tom helped define many of his industry's current manufacturing standards.

Success in business afforded Tom the opportunity to be a generous philanthropist and he was honored several times for his efforts. Tom was a major benefactor to Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, College of the Canyons and many other local nonprofit organizations, including local chapters of the United Way, American Cancer Society and the American Diabetes Association. But helping kids became his passion and he was a driving force behind the Santa Clarita Valley Boys and Girls Club. Tom was also very instrumental in opening the Sheila R. Veloz Breast Imaging Center at Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital in memory of his second wife, Sheila, and he actively participated on the center's board.

With his contagious sense of fun and enthusiastic love of life, Tom had a genuine affection for others. He was a funny man with a constant smile and a twinkle in his eye, and he made many friends, some of whom became targets of his renowned practical jokes. Always the doting grandfather, Tom enjoyed semi-retirement because it gave him the opportunity to spend more time with his beloved grandchildren.

Although Tom will be remembered as a visionary community leader who generously helped others, his lasting legacy rests in his family. He is survived by his wife, Janet, sons, David and Peter, his first wife, Roberta, brothers, Robert, and his identical twin, Frank, as well as stepdaughters, Sheryl Regan and Janine Jones, and 10 grandchildren. His second wife, Sheila, preceded him in death.

Tom's life personifies Cicero's statement that the memory of a well-spent life never dies. Tom Veloz made a positive and profound difference in the Santa Clarita Valley. He will be remembered as a kind man with a giving heart; one who always strived to make his world a better place.

HBCU WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in strong support of the outstanding contributions that our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities have given us over the years.

There are four HBCU's in the state of Florida: Florida Memorial in Miami, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) in Tallahassee, my alma mater, and Edward College in my district in Jacksonville, and Bethune Cookman, a great institution in Daytona Beach, a school I work very closely with.

The importance and outstanding work HBCU's do around the country is most noteworthy. In addition to educating African American students nationwide, they provide resources for our communities, such as mentoring and tutoring programs for our youth.

Around the country, HBCU's enroll 14 percent of all African American students in higher education, even though they make up just 3 percent of our nation's 4,000 institutions of higher education. HBCU's have awarded masters degrees and first-professional degrees to about 1 in 6 African American men and women, and awarded 24 percent of all baccalaureate degrees earned by African Americans nationwide.

I would also like to add that my Alma Mater, Florida A&M University, currently tops the list for black students and was recognized in this month's edition of Black Enterprise Magazine for being the #1 university in the country for black students. It is also the #1 producer of blacks earning bachelors degrees in the United States!

FAMU alone has produced many of society's leaders in various fields, including myself, ALCEE HASTINGS, KENDRICK MEEK, other Members of Congress past and present, the current mayor of Detroit, Kwame Kilpatrick, tennis great Althea Gibson, and football legend Bullet Bob Hayes. Most recently, FAMU has produced young leaders such as Mr. Andrew Gillum, the youngest City Councilman ever to be elected in Tallahassee, Florida, Miss Black Universe 2006, Ms. Kimberlee Borland, and an emerging leader on my staff, Mr. Joseph Bastian.

As you can see, Historically Black Colleges and Universities are a staple in our community and are vital to the success of the students striving to achieve the American dream. These colleges and universities are preparing a new generation of leaders, business people, teachers, entrepreneurs and scholars. I urge your continued support of these historic institutions as we recognize them and spotlight their achievements.

HONORING MR. RAY L. PERETTI OF KENT, WASHINGTON

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight and commend the service of Ray L. Peretti of the Ninth Congressional District of Washington, for his service to his community and the Nation as a member of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents.

Mr. Peretti recently completed his term as the president of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents, and has also served in many positions of responsibility in the association. Mr. Peretti has been a member of the board of directors of PIA National since 1995. He was also a member of the board of directors of PIA of Washington/Alaska, which is now part of the PIA Western Alliance, serving as vice president, president-elect and president and on various committees.

Mr. Peretti has served on the State of Washington Property and Casualty Advisory Committee. He was named Agent of the Year by PIA of Washington/Alaska in 1995, received the Hartford/Jonathan Trumball Council's Chairman's Award. Mr. Peretti was also honored by the Insurance Fire Mark Society of the Pacific Northwest with its Presidential Award, and is the recipient of a public relations award from the Insurance Women of South King County.

Active in his community, Mr. Peretti is the owner of the Hub Insurance Agency of Renton, Washington. A lifelong member of the Renton Lions Club, he is also a member of the Renton Chamber of Commerce, serving 6 years as a member of its board of directors, and has been a member of the Renton Arts Commission and the Renton Ethics Board.

As a professional insurance agent, Mr. Peretti's dedication to the highest standards of his profession has earned him the respect of his friends, associates, business colleagues and of the insurance industry as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise today to recognize the good work that Ray L. Peretti has done throughout his career as a member of the insurance community, and to again congratulate him on the completion of his term as the president of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents.

TRIBUTE TO M. KRISHNAN AND M. MURALI

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wish to formally congratulate M. Krishnan and M. Murali for earning the title of Best Businesspersons of the Year and for their receipt of the Fetna Award of Excellence for 2006. This recognition is the culmination of the contributions that these two brothers have made in the Indian and larger communities.

The two businessmen established Sri Krishna Sweets as the premier purveyor of finest sweets in India. While maintaining uncompromising principles and ethical values, they have applied the highest standards of excellence in areas ranging from purchase to fresh delivery of products to creating a new generation of satisfied customers all of the time.

Outside of the business world, they have been well known in their local community for the initiation of community service projects in India, most notably among them being posting of life guards in Chennai beaches, restoration of water bodies, preservation and promotion of art and culture and addressing environmental issues. As an advocate for environmental consciousness and a big admirer of Indian art and culture, I applaud their commitment. Their corporate social responsibility is worthy of emulation by Indian and American companies.

Sri Krishna Sweets began as a single store in 1948 and it has become the leading retailer of specialty sweets in India with over 54 branches across the country. As Sri Krishna Sweets plans to expand its enterprise to the United States, the company will foster a stronger relationship and bring about a better understanding and cooperation between the U.S. and India.

I look forward to seeing Sri Krishna Sweets outlets opening in the US. Again, I commend Krishana and Murali for their notable efforts.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI MOSHE AND LOIS ROTHBLUM

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rabbi Moshe and Lois Rothblum, a dynamic couple that has been involved in the Adat Ari El synagogue community for 35 years. Rabbi Rothblum is celebrating his retirement, and Lois Rothblum is receiving the Adat Ari El Humanitarian Award.

Rabbi Rothblum has long been a part of the Los Angeles community. He attended Fairfax High School and Los Angeles Hebrew High and graduated from UCLA. His parents instilled in him a love of music and musical theater, evident in his role as a counselor and music specialist at Camp Ramah. He went on to direct musical theater at Adat Ari El during his tenure as Rabbi, and his musical compositions for Shabbat and other occasions are still sung in synagogues all over the world. After his retirement, he will continue to stay involved in youth musical theater.

Moshe's love of music is only one of many amazing facets of his personality that he has showcased as Rabbi. He has been an eloquent advocate for Israel in the Jewish community and the larger southern California community. He is a quiet champion of social justice. He met with the late Cesar Chavez to discuss the plight of migrant farm workers. He broke precedent with the Conservative Jewish movement when, in 1985, he appointed Rabbi Leslie Alexander, the first woman to serve a large Conservative congregation. Rabbi Rothblum also met the late Pope John Paul II during his time as president of the Southern California Board of Rabbis. He is a renowned spiritual leader who has touched many lives.

Lois Rothblum is receiving the Adat Ari El Humanitarian Award. She attended New York University and Columbia University Teachers College. Lois was a religious school teacher for 9 years, and her passion and dedication caused her to become a leading Jewish educator. She currently serves as director of teacher education at the Fingerhut School of Education, University of Judaism.

Rabbi Moshe and Lois Rothblum have made lasting impressions on the Adat Ari El community, as well as the larger Los Angeles community. I am proud to call them friends and proud to be a member of their congregation. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting and honoring Moshe and Lois for all that they have achieved.

THANKING PUBLIC-SPIRITED EMPLOYEES AT GEOEYE IN COLORADO

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the assistance of several public-spirited individuals working at GeoEye, the world's largest commercial satellite imagery company.

GeoEye, which acquired another company, Space Imagining, earlier this year, now operates a constellation of three Earth imaging satellites—Orb View-2, Orb View-3 and IKONOS—that contribute to an international network of more than a dozen regional ground stations, an image archive, and advanced geospatial imagery processing capabilities that are among the best in the world.

GeoEye has a strong presence in Colorado's 2nd Congressional District and recently demonstrated the value of their corporate presence in our state.

Last month, the Boulder County Sheriff and others responded to a report that a young Marine was missing after a fall in Eldorado Canyon State Park. This search effort involved hundreds of volunteers and a significant number of law enforcement officials, and of course the missing Marine's parents were deeply concerned about their son's disappearance, and conventional search methods were proving to be ineffective.

As the search was underway, my office was asked to contact GeoEye to see if they might be able to provide imaging data that could be used to find him.

Within moments of my request, GeoEye was offering up satellite imaging of the Eldorado Springs area and other forms of assistance to the Boulder County Sheriff's Department and to the Marine's family. No questions asked. No request for payment in return for services rendered; just a neighborly helping hand.

I want to express my deep public appreciation for the employees at GeoEye, who were quick to offer the company's assistance and who demonstrated a true sense of community spirit in a difficult situation.

While the law says "corporations" are also "persons," I think it is noteworthy when a company responds to a crisis in the way ordinary citizens do. After all, companies are organized—and properly so—for financial profit and economic benefit. We don't expect corporations, particularly large ones, to exhibit the

very human qualities that neighbors or friends do. And that is why I want to commend GeoEye and thank the company for their quick response and their offer to help.

I want to particularly thank Mr. Matt O'Connell, the CEO of GeoEye, Mr. Mark Brender, the Vice President for Comms/Marketing at GeoEye, and to Kim Goff, Kerri Rose and Val Webb. They generously gave of their time and expertise to help the community. Ms. Webb called my District Office to follow up on the case several times to offer additional assistance. That kind of personal effort certainly impressed me and my staff.

Please join me in commending these individuals and thanking them for their public-spiritedness. They remind us that with the right leadership, corporations are not necessarily abstract institutions lacking the qualities we look for in good friends and neighbors, but are, at their best, integral parts of the community at-large.

CELEBRATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF FRENCH HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to French Hospital Medical Center and acknowledge their 60 years of providing quality healthcare to our community.

Founded by Edison French in 1946, this French Hospital Medical Center brought state of the art medicine to the San Luis Obispo community and continues to do so today. Dr. French, a surgeon, actively encouraged other specialists to settle in the San Luis Obispo area. In 1972, Dr. French moved the hospital to its current location on Johnson Avenue, where it serves residents throughout San Luis Obispo County. Currently, the hospital has working relationships with 320 physicians and employs more than 480 people.

On June 1, 2004, French Hospital was acquired by Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), and joined a network of over 40 medical centers and hospitals in three states. Founded in 1986, CHW is one of our Nation's largest not-for-profit healthcare systems and the largest Catholic healthcare system based in the Western United States. In 2005, French Hospital Medical Center provided more than $5 million in care to the uninsured in our community and to other philanthropic endeavors. The hospital is committed to delivering high-quality, compassionate and affordable healthcare services, with special attention to the poor and underserved.

French Hospital Medical Center has set, and continues to set, a positive example with their passion for the practice of great medicine and their commitment to our local community. I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to represent this community and the many caring staff and administrators of French Hospital Medical Center and am pleased to celebrate their 60-year anniversary.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6061, SECURE FENCE ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 6061, the Secure Fence Act of 2006. This bill is not about border security or terrorism prevention, as the name implies, but is rather a gimmick and will not in fact solve our nation's border and immigration problems. We need to focus on "smart security" and develop a comprehensive plan. Only then will we truly secure our borders and ensure our safety as Americans. This bill strays far from those priorities and is opposed by almost every reasonable business, labor, and civil liberties advocacy group in the country.

The bill before us does not provide any specific dollar amounts to build the mandated fence, and nowhere does the bill even authorize additional Border Patrol, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or Customs officers needed to secure the border. Blindly erecting a fence, without taking into consideration the needs of the area and the men and women who work on the front lines of our borders is not effective and we can do better. We need to focus on "smart security," and we need to do it now.

It is extremely important to know who is entering our country and who is already here. We need to focus on strengthening our borders by improving our surveillance technology, deploying more border patrol agents, and providing them with the materials they need to effectively do their jobs. This is why I am proud to support Mr. Thompson's substitute amendment.

The substitute amendment requires the Department of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive border security strategy by deploying at least 3,000 additional Border Patrol agents and 2,000 additional Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents at our borders each year for the next four years. The substitute also provides helicopters, portable computers, radio communications and hand-held global positioning devices so the agents have all of the resources they need to get the job done.

Mr. Thompson's substitute also ends our ineffective "Catch and Release" practice. We need to ensure that we have adequate space in which to house people until we determine who they are and why they are here. It is unacceptable that illegal immigrants have been released after being charged with a crime simply because there is not adequate space in which to detain them. The substitute authorizes 100,000 additional detention bed spaces through FY 2010 to assist with the detention of undocumented individuals.

We also need to refocus our efforts on monitoring precisely which materials come through our borders. As the lead Democrat on the Subcommittee for the Prevention of Nuclear and Biological Attack, I have called for the installation of radiation portal monitors at designated ports of entry to screen all inbound cargo for radiological or nuclear materials. I am dedicated to ensuring we have this important technology at every entry point.

Although erecting a security fence in specifically targeted areas may be necessary, it needs to be part of a much larger comprehensive plan. In order to employ a plan that is truly effective, we need to take into consideration all of these factors, not just a select few.

Rhetorical bills proposing a quick fix will not secure our borders, and I will not support legislation that does not propose a comprehensive solution. I am proud to support Mr. THOMPSON's substitute amendment, and I urge my colleagues to follow suit.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF GEORGE NASHAR FOR RECEIVING THE NORTH OLMSTEAD DEMOCRAT OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of George M. Nashar, dedicated father and community leader, whose lifelong service has merited him this year's North Olmsted Democrat of the Year Award.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Mr. Nashar grew with a strong sense of responsibility and family values as the oldest of seven siblings. After graduating from Detroit Institute of Technology and Cuyahoga Community College, he proudly served in the U.S. Army for two years. During his service, Mr. Nashar bore witness to the Berlin Wall crisis, a harsh reality of the Cold War that left a lasting impression upon him, strengthening his democratic values and call to civic duty. Back in America, after his service, Mr. Nashar fell in love with his wife Donna and settled down in Ohio, where the two have been happily married for 41 years and blessed with three beautiful daughters, Nancy, Nicole, and Noelle, and nine lively grandchildren. A devoted husband and father, Mr. Nashar has supported his family throughout the years with his employment at General Motors. After retirement, Mr. Nashar stayed active working for Gerald Fuerst at the Clerk of Courts.

In addition to being a hard-working and warm-hearted family man, Mr. Nashar is an exemplary American citizen because of his enthusiastic involvement throughout his local community of North Olmsted. Actively committed to his children's education, Mr. Nashar served for several years on the St. Richard School Parent Club as President and as Chairman of fun and successful fundraisers, in addition to serving for 12 years on the Magnificat High School Board of Governors. A devote Catholic, Mr. Nashar has been ushering for Sunday Mass at St. Richard Parish for over 20 years and has made many friends within the church community.

Mr. Nashar goes above and beyond his civic responsibility with engagement in the political process. As a member of the North Olmsted Democratic Club, serving as its President for two years and repeatedly sponsoring their annual picnic, he works to foster unity and political awareness. From 1990–2006, Mr. Nashar honorably served as Ward 3 Councilman for the City of North Olmsted, chairing several committees including Streets and Transportation and Safety. During these 16 years he was well-respected and repeatedly

re-elected by his constituents because of his steadfast and earnest dedication to their needs as not only a representative, but a friend.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of George M. Nashar, the 2006 North Olmsted Democrat of the Year, whose unwavering commitment to serving his family, community, and country has left a lasting impression, inspiring those around him.

IN TRIBUTE TO BETTE DEWING

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Bette Dewing, a great New Yorker. Bette Dewing is devoted to her community on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, and in recognition of her selfless dedication to the well-being of others and her significant achievements on behalf of the quality of life in New York City, she is being honored this month by the East 79th Street Neighborhood Association.

For decades, Bette Dewing has served on the front lines of the fight to preserve and enhance her fellow New Yorkers' quality of life. A longtime columnist at the premier local newspaper of Manhattan's East Side, Our Town, Bette Dewing has used her public platform expertly and effectively to become an unparalleled advocate for her fellow New York City residents on a wide range of issues. She has been perhaps the Big Apple's leading champion for enhancing pedestrian safety, focusing the attention of government officials on a host of urban ills, most notably the need to curb traffic lawlessness. No New Yorker has done more to combat illegal bicyclists, skateboarders and motorists, whose careless and often selfish behavior is a menace to city pedestrians, in particular to seniors and persons with physical disabilities. A founder of a community-based advocacy organization, Pedestrian First, Ms. Dewing is perhaps more responsible than any other for starting the drumbeat of protest against those who would encroach on the space and safety of her fellow New Yorkers, a call that has since been echoed by many elected officials and municipal government leaders.

Some of Bette Dewing's most important advocacy occurred when she presciently called for a renewed emphasis on the preeminence of family life, respect for the many contributions to our society by the elderly, and a return to civility. Her wise counsel to younger generations to maintain strong family ties is one that everyone should embrace. Similarly, her manifestoes urging a return to a culture in which a prevailing civic-mindedness—including courtesy and consideration for others—is the rule, not the exception, have since been taken to heart by many New Yorkers.

In being honored by the East 79th Street Neighborhood Association, Bette Dewing's achievements are being recognized by one of the most important civic associations in our Nation's greatest metropolis. Representing the residents of Manhattan's Upper East Side living on or around East 79th Street, the dedicated membership of East 79th Street Neighborhood Association and its distinguished and estimable president, Betty Cooper Wallerstein, have made immeasurable contributions to improving the quality of life of their neighbors and their community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing the outstanding contributions to the civic life of New York City made by Bette Dewing.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF W.D. FARR

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions and life-time achievements of Mr. W.D. Farr.

Mr. Farr was recently inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners, which honors those who have embodied and perpetuated the heritage of the American West through their exemplary lives, careers, and achievements.

Mr. Farr, a man of many talents, excelled in ranching, government, and banking.

After inheriting the family agricultural business, Mr. Farr remained a cattle rancher for many years. During this time Mr. Farr worked to improve livestock and farming methods. His innovative ideas became a catalyst for improved irrigation on the eastern plains and influenced ranching methods throughout the United States.

Mr. Farr was also a statesman. While working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mr. Farr advised three U.S. Presidents and traveled the world as an advocate for the U.S. agricultural industry. His dedication to the agricultural community earned him induction into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame in 1995.

Another one of Mr. Farr's successful endeavors was in the banking industry. He directed banks in Greeley and Denver. He also co-founded and chaired the Affiliated Bankshares of Colorado.

Mr. Farr's life epitomizes the courageous and innovative spirit of Colorado and the greater American West.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Mr. Farr in Congress. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating W.D. Farr for his many accomplishments and his service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO E. MALCOLM FIELD, M.D.

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of E. Malcolm Field, M.D. who has served the people of Michigan and our Nation for over 45 years as a neurosurgeon, neuroscience visionary and medical leader. Dr. Field has dedicated his life to healing, personally seeing more than 250,000 patients and performing more than 50,000 neurosurgeries through his practice based in Saginaw, Michigan.

Dr. Field is the founder of Saginaw Valley Neurosurgery, P.C., and a Diplomat of the American Board of Neurological Surgeons. He is a Fellow of both the American College of Neurological Surgeons and the International College of Surgeons. He is also the founder and Medical Director of FNI, the Field Neurosciences Institute. FNI's mission is ''the prevention, early diagnosis, care, and cure of neurological diseases, disorders and injuries.'' Dr. Field's commitment to his patients is to provide compassionate care, technological superiority and a full continuum of neurological services. Under Dr. Field's leadership extensive prevention, research and educational programs are continued. The Field Neurosciences Institute operates in 10 different clinical neurospecialties and has established satellite clinics in 18 communities throughout lower northeastern Michigan.

On September 21, 2006, the Malcolm Field Theatre for the Performing Arts on the campus of Saginaw Valley State University will be dedicated. In addition Dr. Field will be giving the annual James E. O'Neill Jr. Memorial lecture titled ''Quest for a Cure''.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Dr. E. Malcolm Field for the honor Saginaw Valley State University is bestowing on him and for his life long service to the residents of Michigan and the people of our Nation.

PROVIDING FOR EARMARKING REFORM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1000, to provide for earmark reform in the House of Representatives. This measure, I believe, will help bring much-needed transparency and accountability for funding projects in the House. It will do this by obliging Committees to list the names of House Members next to the projects that they request. Identifying project sponsors will allow the public to see how their representatives are choosing to spend their tax dollars.

I am pleased that this legislation will include ALL House Committees. That means this resolution will identify the sponsors of special tax breaks, and special programs as well as those who are asking for appropriations earmarks.

Despite the fact that I support this bill, I am disappointed in its limitations. In the first place, the bill only applies to House rules. It's not the law of the land. So if there are violations, there are no legal consequences. Second, the bill does nothing to limit or at least define Member earmarks. That means that Members will continue to use their seniority and committee assignments to get special deals for their districts. While I'm a strong supporter of bringing tax dollars back to the district, I firmly believe that federal programs and projects need to be awarded based on merit and need, and should be subject to scrutiny and rigorous review.

Having said all this, H. Res. 1000 is a step forward. I am hopeful that greater transparency for the earmarking will allow the public to become more knowledgeable about the

process. At the very least, this will let them know how their taxes are being sent. And at the most, it will create the oversight and accountability we need to lead to better allocation of our precious and limited resources.

CBO ESTIMATE ON H.R. 4844, THE ''FEDERAL ELECTION INTEGRITY ACT OF 2006''

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, please find attached the Congressional Budget Office's estimate for the legislation, H.R. 4844, the Federal Election Integrity Act of 2006, as reported by the Committee on House Administration.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 19, 2006.

Hon. VERNON J. EHLERS,
Chairman, Committee on House Administration, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4844, the Federal Election Integrity Act of 2006.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts are Matthew Pickford (for federal costs), Sarah Puro (for the impact on state and local governments), and Paige Piper/Bach (for the impact on the private sector).

Sincerely,

DONALD B. MARRON,
Acting Director.

Enclosure.

H.R. 4844—Federal Election Integrity Act of 2006

Summary: H.R. 4844 would amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require all voters in federal elections to display a valid and current photo identification card issued by a government agency. The requirement would begin with the November 2008 federal election. The legislation would require the photo identification cards to document U.S. citizenship by the 2010 federal election. The legislation would require states to provide photo identification cards to all eligible voters who cannot pay for them, and it would authorize appropriations for the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to reimburse states for those costs. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4844 would cost about $1 million in 2007 and $77 million over the 2007–2011 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.

H.R 4844 contains intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). Beginning in 2008, the bill would:

Require state and local governments to establish a program that would make certain forms of photo identification available to those who currently do not have it;

Prohibit state and local governments from allowing individuals without proper photo identification to vote; and

Prohibit states from charging a fee for such identification if the applicant cannot afford the fee.

While the aggregate costs to state, local, and tribal governments of complying with these mandates is uncertain, CBO estimates that they would far exceed the threshold established in UMRA ($64 million in 2006, adjusted annually for inflation) in at least one of the first five I years after the mandates go into effect. The bill would authorize funds to cover the costs of reimbursing states for providing identification cards to those individuals that cannot afford them, which CBO estimates would total about $70 million over the next few years.

By requiring individuals to have a government-issued identification to vote in a federal election, H.R. 4844 also would impose new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA. Based on information from government and other sources, CBO estimates that the cost to comply with those mandates would exceed the annual threshold established by UMRA for private-sector mandates ($128 million in 2006, adjusted annually for inflation) in at least one of the first five years the mandates are in effect.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 4844 is shown in the following table. The cost of this legislation falls within budget function 800 (general government).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Photo Identification Card Reimbursement:					
Estimated Authorization Level	0	50	20	1	1
Estimated Outlays	0	44	26	1	1
Election Assistance Commission:					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	2	2	*	*
Estimated Outlays	1	2	2	*	*
Total Changes:					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	52	22	1	1
Estimated Outlays	1	46	28	1	1

NOTE: * = less than $500,000.

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 4844 will be enacted near the start of fiscal year 2007, that the necessary amounts will be provided for each year, and that spending will follow historical patterns for similar programs.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4844 would cost $1 million in 2007 and $77 million over the 2007–2011 period to reimburse the states for the cost of providing photo identification cards to voters who cannot afford to pay the cost of obtaining a card, and the cost to the EAC to operate the reimbursement program.

Photo Identification Card Reimbursement

Starting in fiscal year 2008, section 3 would authorize the appropriation of such sums as are necessary for the EAC to make payments to states to cover the costs of providing government-issued photo identification cards to voters who state that they cannot afford to pay for the cards. The cost of implementing this provision would depend upon the number of voters who receive identification cards for free, and the cost of producing those cards.

The National Commission on Federal Election Reform estimated in 2001 that up to 10 percent of those eligible to vote do not have official state identification (typically, driver's licenses). The commission assumed that this population consisted of the poor (who may not have cars) and those living in dense urban areas (who may not need cars). Indiana, Georgia, and Missouri currently require voters to have photo identification. Those states estimate that around 7 percent of their registered voters do not have a state-issued driver's license or identification card.

Based on the estimates and experience of those states, CBO estimates that about 4 percent of the nation's registered voters—about 7 million individuals—do not have state identification cards and would likely request free identification cards to vote in federal elections. That estimate reflects the expectation that only those registered voters who intend to vote might seek free identification cards.

States typically charge about $10 to issue an identification card. CBO estimates the cost of providing photo identification for voters who cannot afford them would be about $45 million in 2008 and $72 million over the 2008–2011 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. That amount includes the cost of providing free ID cards to some newly registered voters over the 2010–2011 period.

Election Assistance Commission

Section 3 would require the EAC to reimburse the states for the cost of providing free photo identification cards, and to promulgate regulations for obtaining reimbursement. Based on information from the EAC, CBO estimates that additional staffing and administrative requirements necessary for those efforts would cost $1 million in 2007 and $5 million over the 2007–2011 period.

Estimated impact on state, local, and tribal governments: H.R. 4844 contains intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA. Beginning in 2008, the bill would:

Require state and local governments to establish a program that would make certain forms of photo identification available to those who currently do not have it;

Prohibit state and local governments from allowing individuals without proper photo identification to vote; and

Prohibit states from charging a fee for such identification if the applicant cannot afford the fee.

While the aggregate costs to state, local and tribal governments of complying with these mandates is uncertain, CBO estimates that they would far exceed the threshold established in UMRA ($64 million in 2006, adjusted annually for inflation) in at least one of the first five years after the mandates go into effect. The bill would authorize funds to cover the costs of reimbursing states for providing identification cards to individuals that cannot afford them, which CBO estimates would total about $70 million over the next few years.

Preemption of State Voting Laws

The bill would prohibit state and local governments from allowing individuals without proper photo identification to vote. This requirement would preempt state laws in the 47 states that do not currently require all voters to show photo identification when voting. The preemption, in and of itself, would not impose significant costs on those governments.

Establishing an Outreach Program

The bill would require states to ''establish a program'' to provide photo identification cards to meet the requirements of the bill. According to government sources, establishing such a program would require some or all of the following: purchasing certain new equipment, hiring additional staff for certain offices, training current employees, providing outreach activities to educate affected voters via pamphlets, television and radio advertisements, and posting information on state and local Web sites. Costs for each state would vary based on the demographics of the population the state without photo identification and the current voting structure in the state. For example, states that conduct voting by mail would not incur costs to train poll workers, while states that do not currently have a Department of Motor Vehicles office in each county would need to purchase equipment for county offices. CBO estimates that, in aggregate, these costs to establish outreach programs would total about $75 million in 2008 and about $50 million in 2010.

Providing Free Identification Cards

The bill also would require, starting in 2008, states to provide voter identification

cards for free to citizens who cannot afford to pay for one.

In the three states that currently require voters to show photo identification when voting, states provide such cards for free to those who cannot afford them. CBO expects that those states would comply with this mandate without incurring significant additional costs. The 47 states that do not currently require all voters to show photo identification when voting would be required to issue free cards to indigent citizens. While the costs vary by state, on average, states charge about $10 for identification cards that are not driver's licenses. Based on information from the states that currently have photo identification requirements and on nationwide studies of those without photo identification, CBO expects that about 4 percent of the population likely would apply for and receive a free card as a result of this bill's requirements. CBO estimates that the costs to state, local, and tribal governments would total about $70 million, with most costs occurring in calendar year 2008. The bill would authorize funds to cover these costs.

Issuing Identification Cards for Proof of Citizenship

The bill also would require states to issue, by 2010, identification cards for which applicants would be required to provide proof of citizenship. Under current law, states do not collect or place citizenship status of an applicant on their driver's license or other identification cards, although they will begin collecting such information in May 2008 under the requirements of the REAL ID Act. CBO expects that by 2010, roughly half of the voting-age population will have a driver's license that complies with the terms of the REAL ID Act, although such licenses would not necessarily comply with the requirements of this bill.

States could place the citizenship information they collect on these driver's licenses and would incur only small additional costs to comply with the requirements of this bill.

Of the remaining population (those people whose driver's licenses would not come up for renewal until after November 2010), CBO expects that about 20 percent could vote using a passport to prove citizenship. The remaining population—about 50 million people—would be required to either renew their driver's licenses early or to obtain voter identification cards as authorized by the bill. The costs of processing such a large number of applications by 2010 would be substantial. While the costs to states would vary, they would include providing new licenses or identification cards, establishing new databases, hiring and training new staff, and providing services to a large number of additional residents. CBO cannot estimate the total costs of this mandate, but they likely would far exceed the threshold established in UMRA.

State governments may choose to use revenues received from fees to cover the expenses associated with this mandate. Under UMRA, however, these revenues are considered a means of financing and as such are not counted against the mandate costs of H.R. 4844 for purposes of determining whether costs would exceed the UMRA threshold.

Estimated impact on the private sector: By requiring individuals to have a government-issued identification to vote in a federal election, H.R. 4844 would impose new private-sector mandates, as defined in UMRA. Based on information from government and other sources, CBO estimates that the cost to comply with those mandates would exceed the annual threshold established by UMRA for private-sector mandates ($128 million in 2006, adjusted annually for inflation) in at least one of the first five years the mandates are in effect.

Under the bill, the requirement for an individual to have a government-issued identification for federal elections would be implemented in two phases. In 2008, the bill would require individuals to provide ''a government-issued, current, and valid photo identification'' to the appropriate election official when voting in person. Individuals voting other than in person would be required to submit ''a copy of a government-issued, current, and valid photo identification'' along with their ballot. Certain voters in the uniformed services who are absent from the United States during the election would be exempt from this requirement. Individuals who wish to vote and who do not have an appropriate identification card would have to obtain one. Government identification cards such as a passport, a driver's license, or a state-issued photo identification would meet the requirement for voting in federal elections. On average, the state-issued photo identification would be the least expensive method to comply. For individuals who need to obtain identification, the cost of complying with the first phase of the mandate would be fees charged by states along with other expenses for individuals to obtain the photo identification. The bill would prohibit states from charging a fee to any individual who provides an attestation that they cannot afford the fee for a photo identification. In addition, the incremental costs for individuals voting other than in person would be the expense of making a copy of their identification.

Beginning with the regularly scheduled general election for federal offices held in November 2010 and each subsequent federal election, individuals who want to vote would have to get ''a government-issued, current, and valid photo identification for which the individual was required to provide proof of United States citizenship as a condition for the issuance of the identification.'' Passports would meet that requirement. Individuals without passports may be able to use drivers' licenses that are issued and compliant with the REAL ID Act, depending on whether those licenses also meet the requirements of this bill. The REAL ID Act requires states to meet minimum standards for the documentation required by applicants for drivers' licenses and identification cards. Under current law, state-issued drivers' licenses are supposed to be compliant with the REAL ID Act by May 2008. Individuals who have obtained driver's licenses between now and when their state becomes compliant with the REAL ID Act would have to renew their licenses early or obtain another state-issued identification in order to vote in 2010. Based on information from government and other sources regarding the percentage of individuals that renew licenses each year, the percentage of individuals with passports; and the number of individuals that vote in federal elections, CBO estimates that the cost to comply with this mandate would exceed UMRA's annual threshold.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Matthew Pickford; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Sarah Puro; Impact on the Private Sector: Paige Piper/Bach.

Estimate approved by: Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO REGINALD B. KNIGHT

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Reginald ''Reggie'' Knight for his outstanding service to his community.

Reggie graduated from Cass Technical High School in Detroit in 1954. Soon after, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, serving in Vietnam as a Recon Platoon Sergeant. He became senior enlisted Staff Assistant to the Commanding Officer of Fighter Attack Squadron 323 at the Marine Corps Air Station in El Toro, CA before he retired in 1974 as a Sergeant Major.

After Reggie retired from the Marines, he began working for the Veterans Administration (VA), serving as the representative at Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, CA, where he earned his associates degree in 1977. While earning his bachelor's degree at the University of Redlands in California, Reggie gained access to the VA's regional office in Denver as well as becoming health systems specialist at the VA Hospital in Loma Linda, CA. In 1986, he transferred to the Department of Army, eventually earning the position of senior employment development specialist for the U.S. Army Tank Auto/Command in Warren, MI. When he retired in 1994, he settled in Pahrump, NV, becoming a member of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE).

Within 5 years of his membership, Reggie helped triple the size of NARFE's Chapter 2276 by initiating a recruiting program, leading members in a highway cleanup, getting NAFRE signs raised on local highways, joining the local Chamber of Commerce, and launching a public relations campaign in order to allow easily-accessible information about the chapter in the local media. Throughout his membership, Reggie has served as chapter vice president (a position he currently holds), legislative officer, chairman of the public relations and membership committees, and, in 2000, he was elected the 10th president of the Nevada NARFE Federation. Recently, he chaired the host committee for two Nevada Federation conventions.

Reggie has also involved himself in a number of efforts to enrich the lives of the Pahrump community. He has worked with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Service to offer programs such as 4–H, which help youths develop leadership, citizenship, and life skills. He also assisted in the establishment of the Big Brother/Big Sister program in his town. In 2001, Reggie was appointed Chair of a committee to lobby the State legislature to construct a high-tech center in Pahrump; that same year he was honored with the Golden heart Community Service Award from the United Way. He is also active in the Marine Corps League and Disabled American Veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Reginald B. Knight for his admirable efforts to improve the community of Pahrump, Nevada, and for his long record of public service as a Federal employee and retiree. I applaud his efforts and wish him luck in all his future endeavors,

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT TO ENSURE CURRENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce legislation that will help to protect the health care provided to Native Americans by the Indian Health Service.

Providing quality health care is one of the most important Federal responsibilities in Indian country. Through a network of service units scattered across the country and across South Dakota, the Indian Health Service is the primary, and often the only, access point to that care.

For this reason, any service reduction at any service unit should be preceded by a thorough and thoughtful analysis of the impacts of the reduction proposal, an evaluation of alternative options, and meaningful tribal consultation at every step. Current law recognizes this and already requires that IHS conduct an impact study before implementing a reduction.

Unfortunately, the law contains a critical oversight and specifies only that the study occur at least 1 year before any service reduction. It contains nothing to prevent an outdated study from being inappropriately used to justify a service reduction. This legislation would correct that mistake—mandating that the study occur 1 year, but nor more than 2 years, before the actual service reduction. This will ensure that any analysis will reflect current conditions, not ones that no longer exist.

This is a small and reasonable change that is both consistent with the intent of existing statute and, I think, an important improvement. Though introduced as a stand alone measure today, I am hopeful that my amendment can later be added to Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments moving through this Congress.

TRIBUTE TO META JACKSON

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Meta Jackson for continuously serving the Juniata Township Election Board for the past 50 years. Meta will be honored at a ceremony on November 7 for her service to the community.

Meta started as an election inspector in 1956 during the Dwight Eisenhower-Adlai Stevenson Presidential race. At the time the paper election ballots were counted by hand and the counting often extended into the next day. She has told her current fellow poll workers that in the 1950s they would be up 24 hours straight working to get every ballot counted. Meta has served as the chair of the Election Board for several decades and has witnessed many changes over the years. Today the township uses opti-scan machines and automark loading terminals for the disabled that count the ballots as they run through the system.

In addition to serving as an election official for the past 50 years, Meta is active in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Ladies Auxiliary, Ladies of the Moose, and the Caro Eagles. She has lived in Juniata Township since the age of 5 and graduated from Caro High School. She married the late Walter Jackson in 1953 and moved to the family dairy farm. Meta and Walter have four children and nine grandchildren. Meta continues to help out on the family farm by doing the recordkeeping and running errands.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Meta Jackson for 50 years as an election official and wish her the best as she continues her service to the community.

THE DISABLED WARRIORS' FAMILY EDUCATION ACT OF 2006

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce H.R. 6096 the Disabled Warriors' Family Education Act of 2006. I am especially pleased that the Ranking Member of the Veterans Affairs Committee Honorable LANE EVANS, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN and Honorable STEPHANIE HERSETH join me as original cosponsors.

The Disabled Warriors' Family Education Act of 2006 would allow spouses and dependent children to access their Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance under chapter 35 of title 38, U.S.C. prior to the severely injured servicemember being discharged from active duty.

Many of our disabled warriors have spouses who find themselves faced with being the breadwinner of the family. It is important that these individuals have access to their education benefits to improve their ability to compete in the job market. Therefore, once the servicemember receives a VA rating stating that their injuries are permanent and total in nature, the servicemember's spouse, and college-aged dependent children may begin their education during the servicemember's convalescence period, which in some instances may be 2 years.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation that will help families of our servicemembers who have sacrificed so much for the safety of our nation in the Global War on Terrorism, and I urge my colleagues to support the Disabled Warriors' Family Education Act of 2006.

DENTON RECEIVES SECOND STORMREADY RECOGNITION

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the City of Denton, TX, for receiving its second StormReady recognition. I commend Mayor Perry McNeill and the City of Denton's Office of Emergency Management for their commitment to supporting broader region and State efforts, both in planning and response, to the weather-related challenges we have faced in 2006.

The National Weather Service issues StormReady recognition to cities, such as Denton, that establish a level of preparedness beyond the minimum standards of severe weather operations. These leading cities are selected based on their readiness in six areas, including the receipt of National Weather Service information, local weather and water monitoring, local warning distribution, communication of information to the National Weather Service in Fort Worth, community preparedness, and administrative tools. The City of Denton met or exceeded each of these areas.

Under the capable direction of Denton's Emergency Manager Michael Penaluna, Mayor McNeill and the City of Denton have demonstrated their commitment to protecting and preparing citizens for severe weather emergencies. Thanks to the hard work of these individuals, the City of Denton is a safer place and a model for communities around the nation.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to the City of Denton, Mayor Perry McNeill and the Office of Emergency Management on receiving their second StormReady emergency response recognition.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOSEPH PATRICK LEE

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and mourn the passing of, Dr. Joseph Patrick Lee, the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida.

Dr. Lee was an institution at Barry University, known throughout the Barry family and to generations of students. He was an extraordinary scholar and an excellent administrator. He served quietly, competently, and well, helping to develop and expand Barry College into the major University it is today. His passing is a huge loss.

Dr. Lee was also an integral part of the South Florida community for over 25 years. He served on the boards of directors of numerous community groups, including president of the Miami Shores Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club of Miami Shores. Dr. Lee's many honors included: the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship; Danforth Foundation National Fellowship; Fulbright Fellowship, Université de Paris; and National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Fellowship. He was elected Commissioner of Florida's Southern Association of Colleges and Schools from 2000–05, and served on its executive council in 2004.

Born November 30, 1942, in Leitchfield, Kentucky, Dr. Lee came to Barry University from Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, North Carolina, where he held the positions of vice president for academic affairs; academic dean; and associate professor of French. His love of language led him to earn his doctor of

philosophy from Fordham University in New York, with a major in French, minor in Spanish. He earned his bachelor's degree from Brescia College in Owensboro, Kentucky, majoring in French with minors in English, Spanish and history.

Considered a preeminent scholar of Voltaire and an internationally respected scholar and lecturer, Dr. Lee co-authored ''Livre dangereux: Le Dictionnaire philosophique de Voltaire'' in 1994, and published book reviews in 10 journals.

Dr. Lee became Barry University's vice president for academic affairs in 1981. As its chief academic officer, Dr. Lee was an integral part of Barry University growing from a small college of just under 2,000 students to today's institution of more than 9,200. Barry University, Florida's fourth-largest private institution of higher education, provides bachelor's, master's, law, and seven doctoral degree programs across the state. Founded in 1940, the university is sponsored by the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. Barry University, named one of the most diverse institutions of higher education in the South by US News and World Magazine for the last seven years, possesses a diverse student population from more than 70 countries characterizing Barry's global community.

Dr. Lee's life mirrored the diversity found at Barry University. His research and travels took him to France, England, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany, and his reputation led him to more than 30 locations throughout the United States and the world as a speaker and guest lecturer. Further, he was a member of more than 15 professional organizations, including the American Association of Teachers of French, American Association of University Administrators, American Comparative Literature Association, American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Modern Language Association, North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association. Dr. Lee also was appointed to the editorial board of the ''Complete Works of Voltaire,'' and was national secretary-treasurer for Delta Epsilon Sigma.

Dr. Joseph Lee's achievements were great, as was his commitment to Barry University's community and the broader community of South Florida. I offer my sincere condolences to his family and all who were touched by his greatness.

TRIBUTE TO OTTAWA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Ottawa Township High School (OTHS) in Ottawa, Illinois for its remarkable accomplishment of winning the Illinois State Music Championship for the tenth consecutive year.

Much of the credit for this amazing achievement must be attributed to the strong leadership of Mr. Roger Am, Vocal Music Director, and Ms. Sarah Reckmyer, Director of Bands. Clearly, their hard work and commitment to the program over the years have developed an environment of high expectations.

Further credit for the OTHS success is due to the support of the school administration; the work of the music staff at the elementary schools which feed into Ottawa Township High School and the OTHS students themselves who have refused to accept any outcome short of victory in the state music competition.

It is quite refreshing to see a public high school with such a strong commitment to the fine arts. In addition to its obviously outstanding music program, Ottawa Township High School also possesses and displays a truly remarkable multi-million dollar collection of artwork—a fine arts attribute which surely few public high schools in the nation can match.

In closing, let me state just how proud and pleased I am to have this chance to provide my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives with this shining example of a public educational institution which believes so strongly in offering its students this type of fine arts opportunity. I encourage my colleagues to share this example with the high schools in their own congressional districts in hopes of spurring interest in the fine arts in our young citizens across our nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, September 14, 2006, I was unavoidably detained due to a prior obligation.

I request that the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD reflect that had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 448—''no.'' On Ordering the Previous Question providing for the adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 1000) providing for earmarking reform in the House of Representatives (H. Res. 1003).

Rollcall No. 449—''yes.'' On Agreeing to the Resolution providing for the adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 1000) providing for earmarking reform in the House of Representatives (H. Res. 1003).

Rollcall No. 450—''yes.'' On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass the Thomas J. Manton Post Office Building (H.R. 6033).

NATIONAL HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Mr. JOHN LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, no discussion of our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities would be complete without mention of the Atlanta University Center Consortium. I have the privilege of representing, in my Congressional District, this remarkable consortium of institutions of higher learning which comprises: Clark Atlanta University; Spelman College; Morehouse College; Morehouse School of Medicine; the Interdenominational Theological Institute. I also am fortunate to represent Morris Brown College, Georgia's first college founded by African-Americans for African-Americans, in my Congressional District.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the rich history and the integral role that these institutions have played in educating African-American scholars for over a century.

Atlanta University Center—As the largest concentration of historically Black colleges and universities in the Nation, the Atlanta University Center has played a pivotal role in providing African Americans access to higher education for over 150 years. The history of the Atlanta University Center Consortium truly demonstrates the forward thinking of those who came before us.

During the 1930s, the modern organization of the Atlanta University Center emerged, with Atlanta University, Clark College, Morris Brown College, and the Interdenominational Theological Center affiliating a few years later. In 1957, the controlling Boards of six HBCU institutions (Atlanta University; Clark, Morehouse, Morris Brown and Spelman Colleges; and Gammon Theological Seminary) ratified new Articles of Affiliation, creating the present-day Atlanta University Center. In 1964, the Atlanta University Center, Inc. was incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization to provide services and programs to its member institutions. Today, Atlanta University Center Consortium member institutions continue to share a unique bond and a common goal of providing quality education for African Americans.

I want to commend the outstanding work of the Atlanta University Center, Consortium Executive Director, Dr. Marilyn T. Jackson, and the staff, faculty of the Atlanta University Center.

Clark Atlanta University—Formed by the consolidation of Atlanta University, which offered only graduate degrees, and Clark College, a 4-year undergraduate institution oriented to the liberal arts, Clark Atlanta University was formed in 1988. While Clark Atlanta University continues to maintain its historic relationship with the United Methodist Church, it should be noted that the legacy of both Clark College and Atlanta University extend back to the mid 19th century.

Clark College was founded in 1869 as Clark University by the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which later became the United Methodist Church. Atlanta University was established by the American Missionary Association, with later assistance from the Freedman's Bureau in 1865.

Prior to its consolidation, Atlanta University was the Nation's oldest graduate institution serving a predominantly African-American student body. By the late 1870s, Atlanta University was renowned for supplying black teachers and librarians to the public schools of the South. By 1930, Atlanta University was offering graduate coursework in liberal arts, social and natural sciences; it would later go on to adopt professional programs in social work, library science, and business administration.

Clark Atlanta University continues to emphasize sound ethical and moral principles that promote personal integrity and understanding of others. Additionally, Clark Atlanta University accepts the mandate of its parent institutions:

Atlanta University's motto, ''I'll Find a Way or Make One,'' and Clark College's motto, ''Culture for Service.''

I want to commend the outstanding work of Clark Atlanta University's current President, Dr. Walter Broadnax, and the staff, faculty, students, and alumni.

Interdenominational Theological Center—The Interdenominational Theological Center was chartered in 1958 through the mutual efforts of four denominations, representing four seminaries: Morehouse School of Religion, Gammon Theological Seminary, Turner Theological Seminary, and the Phillips School of Theology. The Interdenominational Theological Center would later add the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary; the Charles H. Mason Theological Seminary, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Atlanta. Today, over 15 different denominations are represented throughout the center, including Disciples of Christ (Christian Church), United Church of Christ, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic, as well as students who are nondenominational.

The ITC has an international reputation for producing exceptional clergy and a longstanding tradition of community outreach, and it is known for its commitment to promoting service to both the church and society. In fact, the International Theological Center is currently playing an important role in fostering a national dialogue surrounding the Black church's role in the renewal of American society.

I want to commend the outstanding work of the Interdenominational Theological Center's current President, Dr. Michael A. Battle, and the staff, faculty, students, and alumni of the Interdenominational Theological Center.

Morehouse College—Founded in 1867 as the Augusta Institute in Augusta, Georgia, Morehouse College is the Nation's largest liberal arts college for men. In addition to ensuring that its students are prepared both academically and socially, Morehouse also takes great pains to ensure that its students are spiritually prepared for leadership and success in the larger society; as a result of this unique focus, Morehouse has the distinction of conferring bachelor's degrees on more black men than any other college or university in the United States.

I am pleased to note that Morehouse's notable alumni include some very distinguished Members of this Congress: my colleague from Georgia, Congressman SANFORD BISHOP and my good friend from New York, MAJOR OWENS. It also should be noted that Morehouse counts former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, and former Health and Human Services Secretary Leon Sullivan, among its prominent alumni.

I want to commend the outstanding work of Morehouse College's current President, Dr. Walter Massey, in addition to its students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Morehouse School of Medicine—Morehouse School of Medicine was established in 1975, as part of Morehouse College, to address both a severe shortage of minority doctors, and a shortage of doctors in rural areas and inner cities. In 1983, Morehouse School of Medicine joined the consortium of institutions known as Atlanta University Center and was granted full accreditation of its M.D. degree program in April 1985.

Recognized for taking the lead in educating primary care physicians, 68 percent of Morehouse School of Medicine alumni are practicing in primary care disciplines, while 84 percent are practicing medicine in underserved areas. Furthermore, Morehouse School of Medicine's research focuses on areas that disproportionately affect the African-American and other minorities. Its institutes include, but are not limited to: the National Center for Primary Care, the Cardiovascular Research Institute, the Neuroscience Institute, and the NASA Space Medicine and Life Sciences Research Center.

I want to commend the outstanding work of Morehouse School of Medicine's current President, Dr. John Maupin, in addition to its students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Spelman College—Founded in 1881 for the purposes of educating African-American women and girls, Spelman College has empowered women to fully use their talents to succeed and to better the world, for many generations. As one of two black women's colleges in the Nation, Spelman develops its students not only academically but also emotionally and spiritually.

Spelman students are encouraged to pursue the study of fields where minorities and women are often underrepresented, such as math, science, and engineering. To this end, Spelman has forged partnerships with NASA and has been designated as one of six institutions designated by the National Science Foundation and NASA as a Model Institution for Excellence in undergraduate science and math education.

I want to commend the outstanding work of Spelman's current President, Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, in addition to its students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Morris Brown College—Morris Brown College is a private, liberal arts, 4-year institution founded in 1881 by members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Today, thousands of leaders in government, education, business, technical fields and the professions are proud to have Morris Brown College as their alma mater.

While the Atlanta community was deeply troubled by the April 2003 decision of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to rescind the accreditation of Morris Brown College, we remain hopeful that the institution will soon be restored to its full academic standing. I stand in solidarity with Morris Brown College, as it moves forward through this challenging transition, and I am confident that the institution will return stronger than ever.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support for the goals and ideals of Historically Black Colleges and Universities week, and I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same.

PROVIDING FOR EARMARKING REFORM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this sham legislation and call on this Congress to pass serious reform legislation to clean up the corruption in the People's House.

The culture of corruption under the current Republican Majority is a stain on the honor of everyone who serves this institution. The former Republican Majority Leader has been indicted, one former Republican Member of the Appropriations Committee is serving a lengthy Federal prison term, and just this morning we learned that a former powerful Republican Committee Chairman has agreed to plead guilty to criminal charges. And throughout the current l09th Congress, the Republican Leadership has shut down the Ethics Committee that has responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the U.S. House.

I support full disclosure of all Member-directed appropriations to shine a light on the process and ensure any special interest provisions can pass muster of public scrutiny. It is well past time for Congress to pass serious lobbying reform to clean up this institution.

Unfortunately, House Resolution 1000, the so-called Earmark Reform Act is a fraud. It would do nothing to expose the Alaskan ''Bridge to Nowhere'' because it does not apply to authorization bills. And on appropriations bills, this proposal sets up a huge loophole because it does not apply to what is known as the Manager's Amendment. This omission simply sets up a new conduit for the Republicans' earmark excesses.

Mr. Speaker, I regret the Republican party bosses refuse to bring legislation to clean up the corruption in Congress, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this scam legislation.

S. 418: MILITARY PERSONNEL FINANCIAL SERVICES PROTECTION ACT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 418, the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act. This act helps to ensure that our military personnel are not vulnerable to immoral and dishonest insurance schemes.

I think the provisions of this bipartisan bill are crucial for the protection of our Armed Forces and their families. While most of America's focus on the military concerns our actions abroad, protecting personnel and their families at home can sometimes be overlooked. But for years now, men and women in the armed services have fallen victim to unscrupulous salespersons pushing high cost and unnecessary financial products and life insurance. This practice must be stopped.

As numerous investigations, studies, and congressional hearings have shown, bad actors within the insurance and financial products industry have been taking advantage of military personnel in order to turn a quick profit. The military personnel they target are often young, inexperienced in financial matters, and particularly vulnerable to the aggressive sales tactics used by some companies. To make matters worse, Department of Defense Directives and state regulations would be violated or completely ignored by these salespersons, without repercussion.

In some cases, servicemen and women were sold life insurance policies with low benefits and premiums as high as fourteen times the amount available to every enlisted person under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program. In other cases, they were sold investments that have all but disappeared from the civilian markets because they can rob investors of years of earnings. But some salespersons found a niche outside of the public mainstream to sell these disreputable investments on our military bases.

It should be noted that there are many upstanding financial and insurance companies that sell very worthwhile investment and insurance products to military personnel and their families. They should be applauded for the fine job that they do in helping our military members and their families. This bill is targeted at the few who abuse the system and prey upon our military.

This bill, the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act, will stop these practices by targeting the bad actors, adding much-needed transparency and communication between federal and state agencies. This bill clarifies confusing jurisdictional issues between DoD and state regulators, allowing regulators to better enforce state and federal law on military bases. It would create a registry to track investment advisors, brokers, dealers, and insurance salespersons, and let bases know when a suspicious salesperson has walked through their gates. Finally, the bill would ban the worst types of financial products being sold to our military. These products have disappeared from the civilian market, and they should disappear from our military installations too.

This bill has gained bipartisan support in Congress. I urge you to support this legislation and protect the financial future of our military personnel and their families. During a time when so many of our armed forces are bravely fighting tyranny abroad, we must ensure that they are protected at home.

IN HONOR OF POCAHONTAS' SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the city of Pocahontas in Randolph County, Arkansas, which will celebrate its 150th anniversary this year. This is a significant milestone for the community and for all who helped shape the city's history.

Pocahontas has a long history dating back to the 1700's when the region was occupied by the French and a number of Indian tribes, including the Osage and Cherokee. The city's first settler, Ransom S. Bettis, arrived from Greenville, Missouri, in the early 1800's and is credited with helping establish Pocahontas as the county seat.

Pocahontas began as a significant river port and the first supply stop in Arkansas for travelers coming down Old Southwest Road. Several famous frontiersmen, including Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin, General Ulysses S. Grant and others, made stops in Pocahontas during this time. Even today, the city continues to serve as a strategic educational and agricultural center for Randolph County and the state.

The city constructed its first courthouse in 1837, a 40 feet by 40 feet two story structure. After the courthouse collapsed in 1870, Pocahontas residents replaced the structure in 1875 with the historic courthouse that remains today. The courthouse is a central landmark in Pocahontas' historic downtown business square with most of the commercial outlets renovated to compliment the building.

Pocahontas served as a major recruiting, training, and supply center during the Civil War. The city housed as many as 10,000 men after Arkansas withdrew from the Union on May 6, 1861. These men helped the state prepare for combat and secure the northern border from invasion. Federal troops even burned a section of the city, including the Pocahontas newspaper office, during the conflict.

The late nineteenth century through the mid-1920s marked a golden age for Pocahontas. The city had seven hotels and forty-three steamboats that navigated the Black River and turned Pocahontas into an important port of commerce. During this time, Pocahontas landed the Hoxie, Pocahontas, and Northern Railroad in 1896, completed the Hauk Railroading Company's connection of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, to Pocahontas in 1902, and watched the San Francisco Railroad construct a new railroad bridge across the Black River in 1911. Other early industries included four button factories, a brick company, Hanauer's cotton gin, the Grafton Stave and Heading Company, and the Pocahontas Bending Works, which made wooden parts for wagon wheels around 1901.

Development slowed during the 1920s and 1930s until several industries began to locate in the area. In 1942, Pocahontas landed a factory that made powdered eggs for the army and employed about 500 residents. Brown Shoe Company came to the area just a few years later, becoming the largest employer in Pocahontas. Other factories came in the 1960s including McGee, Aircraft Engineer, Cinch, and Pro Group, followed by Amerace ESNA in the 1970s.

Pocahontas continues to benefit today from its central location between the hills of the Ozarks to the west and the rich farmland of the Delta to the east. Tourists and residents flock to the region's five rivers year-round for all types of recreational activities including fishing and canoeing. The city is also home to the Black River Technical College which contributes significantly to the region's educated workforce.

This month, friends and residents of Pocahontas will kick-off a three week long celebration honoring the city's 150 years of history. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Pocahontas, Arkansas, on this significant milestone. We send our appreciation to the city's citizens for years of hard work and dedication to their community, and wish Pocahontas many more years as a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

TRIBUTE TO HAL POTE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take his opportunity to recognize and congratulate Hal Pote on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

Hal, a friend of mine, diligently serves as the President of the Spina Bifida Foundation, SBF. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus, I have had the privilege of working along side Hal and truly appreciate his commitment and dedication to improving the quality of life for individuals living with Spina Bifida.

Mr. Speaker, Spina Bifida—our nation's most commonly permanently disabling birth defect—occurs in the first month of pregnancy when the spinal column does not close completely. Spina Bifida occurs in approximately 7 out of 10,000 live births and currently there are 70,000 men, women, adolescents, and children living with Spina Bifida in the United States.

In addition to Hal's strong professional commitment to improving the lives of those living with Spina Bifida, Hal has a binding personal tie that unites his heart with his expertise. Hal's nephew, Gregory was born with Spina Bifida almost 20 years ago.

Supporting his nephew through more than 20 surgeries, Hal counts it a privilege to share in Gregory's many wonderful moments like in 2004 when Gregory carried the Olympic torch. Hal is dedicated to ensuring that Gregory and all other individuals living with Spina Bifida enjoy a high quality of life. Through Hal's vision and dedication to helping Gregory and the tens of thousands of people like him, he joined with a group of colleagues to form the Spina Bifida Foundation in 1999.

In its 7 years of existence, the Foundation has achieved many amazing things for the Spina Bifida community. Just a few years ago, people born with Spina Bifida did not live past their teenage years and yet today, thanks to the advances in medical research and the dedication of public advocates like Hal Pote, many children with Spina Bifida are living to be adults. With more and more people with Spina Bifida living into adulthood, Hal and the Spina Bifida Foundation are committed to addressing the new challenges these adults now face.

One of the specific projects in which Hal has been instrumental is urging Gruma—one of the world's largest producers of corn flour and tortillas—to begin research and product testing on enriching its corn products with folic acid, a known preventative of Spina Bifida. At the urging of the Foundation and with the full and strong support of the Spina Bifida Caucus, Gruma now has a year-end goal of enriching all its corn products sold within the United States.

This is an outstanding and notable achievement. In fact, studies show that if all women in the United States consumed the recommended amount of folic acid every day before and during early pregnancy, up to 70 percent of neural tube birth defects could be prevented. Members of the Hispanic/Latino Community are at a higher risk of Spina Bifida affected pregnancies than any other ethnic group and this important and commendable action by Gruma has significant implications for improving the health and well-being of the US Hispanic/Latino population.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Hal for his outstanding leadership of the Spina Bifida Foundation and his steadfast commitment to improving the quality of life not just for his nephew Gregory but for all individuals living with Spina Bifida. I wish him the

best on the occasion of his 60th birthday and am confident that he will continue to enjoy many successes in all of his charitable and professional endeavors.

H.R. 5450, NOAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation to reauthorize NOAA and call on the agency to work to develop an inland warning system. Six years ago I held a Hurricane Summit in the Second District of North Carolina. This was in response to the devastation that was brought to my State by Hurricane Floyd. Hurricane Floyd was one of the most devastating storms to hit the United States in more than 25 years. When Hurricane Floyd roared ashore in North Carolina in September of 1999, the storm took at least 56 lives, and left damages upwards of $6 billion from the Carolinas to New England.

Although the National Weather Service uses the Saffir-Simpson Scale to classify hurricane strength according to wind speed, Hurricane Floyd showed us that much more damage, death, and destruction can be created by unexpected inland flooding. One year ago this fact was displayed again with disastrous intensity during Hurricane Katrina when the damage was not just limited to the immediate coastal areas of the gulf coast. After the storms there were inland areas in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama that were inaccessible for weeks following the severe flooding.

The purpose of my Hurricane Summit was to bring together meteorological experts from universities, the National Hurricane Center, and the National Weather Service to develop a more accurate index for inland flood monitoring. With the information gathered at this summit, I drafted legislation to ensure that NOAA and the National Weather Service make significant improvements to their inland flood warning system. H.R. 2486, the Inland Flood Forecasting and Warning System Act of 2002, was passed in the 107th Congress and enjoyed wide bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation directed NOAA and the National Weather Service to improve the capability to forecast inland flooding associated with tropical storms and hurricanes, to develop a distinctive inland flood warning index for emergency management officials, and to train emergency management officials, National Weather Service personnel, and meteorologists to use these improved forecasting techniques for inland flooding.

An important part of this legislation requires the National Weather Service and NOAA to report annually to Congress on the progress of this new flood index. I would like to continue to work with the members of the Science Committee and the Appropriations Committee to ensure that NOAA provides these reports to the Congress in a timely manner.

Congress must provide the proper oversight to NOAA to ensure that the progress in developing an improved inland flooding index can be put in place to save lives.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD BEHNE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Major Edward Lee Behne, a decorated military veteran, entrepreneur, husband, and father who passed away on September 8. Major Behne served his country by flying UH–1 Hueys in Vietnam from 1967 to 1970. Major Behne is the Vietnam War's second-most decorated army pilot, having received two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Legion of Merit, a VN Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star and Palm, two Silver Stars, six Bronze Stars, VN Service Medal (9 campaigns), two Meritorious Unit Citations, and 80 Air Medals.

In 1979, Edward Behne retired from the army to return to his home in Texas, in 1988, he founded Tex-Air Helicopters, Inc. Guided by his vision of a company that would provide customers an unprecedented level of quality, service, and performance in helicopter operations, Major Behne worked for over 20 years to build Tex-Air into one of the major providers of helicopter services in the Gulf Coast region. By 2000, the Tex-Air fleet had grown to thirty aircraft and was the most modern and sophisticated helicopter fleet in the United States. Operations ranged from Florida to Mexico with twelve helicopter bases, fifteen offshore refueling platforms, and two major maintenance facilities. Tex-Air established an extensive offshore radio network for operational control and flight following across the entire Gulf of Mexico using repeaters and a central communications base. In 2003, Major Behne retired from Tex-Air to return to his beloved Texas hill country ranch, where he entertained his best friends and family members, worked and hunted.

War hero, entrepreneur, rancher, family man—Major Edward Behne made numerous contributions to the betterment of his country and set an example for us all. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Major Edward Lee Behne and extend our condolences to his wife, Mary Lynne; two sons, Mark Behne and Mike Behne; four step children, Jimmy Gonzalez, Mark Gonzalez, Tanya Roland and Robert Hughey; brother, Richard Behne; sister, Gwen Pascal; grandchild, Josephine Behne; and 14 step grandchildren, as well as all of Major Behne's family and friends.

TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL GOMPERS HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Samuel Gompers High School as it celebrates its seventieth anniversary of service in the South Bronx. The first New York School designed to serve as a vocational high school, Samuel Gompers is a trailblazing institution that I am proud to represent in Congress.

Gompers opened its doors on September 12, 1935 and immediately began to make valuable contributions to the nation. After training machinists and welders during World War II, Gompers became one of the first high schools to adopt a technical program and to receive accreditation from the Middle States Atlantic School Association.

As the world evolves, Gompers adjusts its curriculum accordingly, ensuring its students are always a step ahead of rapid advances in technology. Majors such as Computer Pre-Engineering with Cisco Certification, Desktop Publishing, Computer Aided Design, Copier Repair, and Electronic Technician with A+ Certification guarantee that the young men and women of Samuel Gompers will posses the skills necessary to solve the complex technological problems of the 21st century.

The pursuit of excellence shared by the faculty and students of this institution creates an atmosphere that is ripe for achievement. Accordingly, the Gompers students have won numerous awards and competitions, including second place in the New York City All Academy Competition, third place in the New York/New Jersey Regional Botball tournament, and first place in the 2005 high school division of the USA Memory Championship. In addition, the school has graduated numerous students who have gone on to have very successful careers. Some of its more well known alumni include General Robert White, who piloted the X–15, the nation's first rocket aircraft; Damien Radcliffe, of the movie Glory Road; and former Gompers music teacher Alexander Altieri, who performed with legends such as Tito Puente and Eddie Palmieri.

Mr. Speaker, while I am truly impressed by the academic achievements of Gompers, it is the school's commitment to serving the community that makes me most proud. Currently, the school tutors students from neighborhood primary schools, holds food drives for the needy, and plants trees in an effort to beautify the South Bronx. In past years, the school sponsored a shared instruction program for students who attended high schools without trade programs.

''Through a depression and two wars, Samuel Gompers High school in the South Bronx has been supplying skilled craftsmen for the nation's industries,'' said a New York Post article in January of 1960. Fortunately, forty-six years and three wars later, Gompers continues to provide state of the art vocational and technical training in today's highly technological world.

Mr. Speaker. for its commitment to excellence and tireless efforts to empower those who have the least among us, I ask that my colleagues join me in paying tribute to Samuel Gompers High School on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO COMBAT HUMAN SEX TRAFFICKING

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, along with Representative LYNN WOOLSEY and Representative JERROLD NADLER, I am introducing legislation that would combat human sex trafficking by using the tax code to put traffickers in prison. Approximately 600,000 to 800,000

people are trafficked across international borders each year. Instead of dreams of better jobs and better lives, they are trapped into a nightmare of coercion, violence, and disease. However, trafficking is not just a problem in other countries. In addition to the men, women, and children from around the world who are brought into the United States for the sole purpose of being bought and sold by American citizens for commercial sex, in many communities, the victims themselves are Americans.

The legislation, which is based on an amendment attached by Senator GRASSLEY to S. 1321, the ''Telephone Excise Tax Repeal Act of 2005,'' would authorize $2 million toward the establishment of an office within the IRS Criminal Investigation division to prosecute sex traffickers for violations of tax laws. This office would coordinate closely with the existing task forces in the Department of Justice that are focused on sex trafficking offenders. The IRS would be directed to focus on the willful failure of traffickers to file returns, supply information, or pay tax where the taxpayer is an ''aggravated'' non-filer. Additionally, the provision establishes a new felony offense for an aggravated failure to file to include failure to file with respect to income or payments derived from activity which is criminal under Federal or State law. The aggravated failure shall carry a maximum sentence of ten years per failure and shall increase the penalty from $25,000 under current law to $50,000. The legislation also increases other penalties for underpayment or overpayment of tax due to fraud.

The bill works to the benefit of the women and girls that are victimized by the traffickers not only by removing the traffickers from the streets but also by revising the IRS Whistleblower provisions that are currently in place so that the women and girls who choose to participate in the investigation of the trafficker will be eligible to participate in the whistleblower program and may ultimately receive some payment for their participation.

It is important that we protect the victims of the sex trade industry, and punish the predators who exploit them.

REMEMBERING 9–11

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, in a day that will be looked upon as one of the worst days in American history, I remember it as a day where the world saw the best in all of us. Together, we mourned the loss of our fellow countrymen, grieved for the families they left behind and reaffirmed our resolve to cement the lessons of their sacrifice. Today, we celebrate their memory by forging a renewed commitment to never forget the lives lost on September 11th. For every life we lost, there was also a tale of courage and spirit.

I'd like to take a moment to tell you the story of a 53-year-old Catholic priest living in San Diego named Bill Metzdorf who is also a member of the California National Guard. On September 11th, Father Metzdorf was fulfilling his annual National Guard requirements by performing funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. Minutes following the attack on the Pentagon, Father Metzdorf was coordinating an impromptu prayer service. He would later accompany rescue workers into the Pentagon debris and perform blessings over the remains of those who did not survive the attack. He did this for more than two weeks, working 12-hour shifts.

Consoling family members, friends and survivors, Father Metzdorf helped strangers become friends, facing his difficult mission with unshakable resolve and fierce determination. Amidst all of the fear and uncertainty, Father Metzdorf stood with unwavering strength and gave others the gift of comfort. His story is similar to many of the police, fire and emergency responders who went into action, unafraid and unwilling to let cowards win the day.

As we honor those people lost five years ago and the heroes who helped rebuild an injured nation, let us also remember the men and women who are currently serving in our armed forces, who did not expect nor invite what would follow after September 11th. The people living in the San Diego region that I represent understand as well as anyone what kind of sacrifices come with military service. They have agreed to put a greater interest above their own and are the cornerstone of our Republic. They are defending the very thing the terrorists tried to destroy and we will never forget their service or sacrifices.

The truth is—we survived the worst and we still stand tall today. Bound by a common spirit of enterprise and a love of liberty, we have moved beyond the shadows cast by the events of 9–11 and persevered. The terrorists may have succeeded in tearing down structures, but no deed can extinguish the flames of freedom, or the American spirit.

55TH ANNIVERSARY OF AL-ANON

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 55th anniversary of Al-Anon Family Groups. As co-chair of the Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, I want to recognize the tremendous work of this dedicated organization.

For over half a century, Al-Anon and Alateen have been a key source of support and hope for families and friends of alcoholics and addicts all over the world, with over 26,000 groups in 115 different countries.

Policymakers often focus attention on the individual with chemical addiction and forget or underestimate how devastating a loved one's disease can be on friends and family members.

Thankfully, Al-Anon and Alateen have never forgotten and are always there whenever a hurting person reaches out for help. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Al-Anon and Alateen.

This month not only marks the 55th anniversary of Al-Anon, it is also the 17th annual National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. As we celebrate the promise and possibility of recovery this month, we must also remember the loved ones impacted by this devastating disease. As the chemical dependency professionals tell us, chemical addiction is truly a ''family disease.''

Thanks to Al-Anon, these individuals have a place to go where they can find hope and support. For that we owe this wonderful organization and all of its members our support and gratitude for 55 years of dedicated service.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Al-Anon and Alateen.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was regrettably unable to be on the House Floor for rollcall vote 451, final passage of H. Con. Res. 210—Supporting the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015; rollcall vote 452, final passage of H. Res. 622—To recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II; and, rollcall vote 453, final passage of H. Con. Res. 415—Condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is. Had I been present I would have voted: ''aye,'' for rollcall vote 451, ''aye'' for rollcall vote 452, and ''aye'' for rollcall vote 453.

HONORING THE REVEREND DR. RAYMOND A. BELL

HON. JO ANN DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the accomplishments of a great man and a great Virginian, Dr. Raymond A. Bell, Senior Pastor at Mount Hope Baptist Church.

Dr. Bell celebrates his 20th Anniversary with Mount Hope Baptist Church on September 23, 2006.

Dr. Bell is a true pillar of his community. As a leader in the faith community and an advocate for his congregation, Dr. Bell is a real example of the values held dear by Virginians—hard work, perseverance, and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Bell is a true American leader. A successful reverend and public servant who has worked tirelessly for so many years, I wish Dr. Bell many more years to so greatly impact his fellow Virginians.

''FLOOD INSURANCE COMMUNITY OUTREACH GRANT PROGRAM ACT OF 2006''

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, one year after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, it is clear that more needs to be done to protect and prepare homeowners from future catastrophic flooding.

Which is why I have introduced the ''Flood Insurance Community Outreach Grant Program Act of 2006.'' The intent of this legislation is to increase the overall participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) while moving the program toward long-term stability and solvency.

My legislation will forge a stronger partnership between the federal government and local floodplain managers. It will: Create a grant program within FEMA to educate property owners about their flood risk and about the importance of flood insurance; and Funds this grant program at $50 million dollars annually over five years.

People at risk of flooding need to know their options and our local floodplain managers are our best partners in this effort. To put it quite simply, with 20,000 participating communities in NFIP—one size does not fit all. Our local partners know the risks, they know the landscape and in many cases they know the people. They know how to reach out to the people in their flood plain.

They can focus on the estimated 20 to 25 percent of property owners who have fallen through the cracks of our flood insurance system. People who are supposed to carry flood insurance, but do not carry it. Or use the money for an educational campaign directed towards people living in areas protected by levees, but not subject to the federal flood insurance requirement. Spreading the message: Levees can fail or overtop in severe weather. So it is common sense to carry flood insurance, even if the federal government no longer requires it.

This program can work.

Last year, with the support of a $162,000 FEMA grant, my local flood protection body, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), conducted just such a flood insurance outreach initiative.

SAFCA reached out to more than 45,000 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policyholders in the American River floodplain. In February 2005, this densely populated region was released from the Federal flood insurance requirement.

SAFCA's efforts yielded impressive results.

More than one year after SAFCA conducted outreach, 74 percent of the 45,000 NFIP policyholders who were removed from the Federal requirement had maintained their flood insurance protection.

Of this group, 43 percent now carry Preferred Risk flood insurance. Preferred Risk Policies provide property owners, who have been released from the federal requirement, but remain at risk of flooding, with full flood insurance protection for about half the price of a Standard flood policy. Because of their lower cost, it is likely that these Preferred Risk Policies will result in a higher level of policy retention over time.

Through this partnership with SAFCA, FEMA was able to retain a high number of flood insurance policies in the Sacramento region—a region that accounts for nearly 1 in 4 of all flood insurance policies in California.

Increasing the number of people who carry and hold on to their flood insurance will only strengthen the National Flood Insurance Program. And as Katrina made painfully clear: We need a strong and functional program to be there for our constituents in times of crisis.

While this grant program would be funded at $50 million annually and authorized for 5 years, I want to emphasize that this grant program has an excellent return on its investment.

For FEMA to recoup its initial grant to SAFCA, 550 Preferred Risk Policies had to be sold to property owners who otherwise would have canceled their flood insurance. SAFCA accomplished this . . . more than 20 times over.

Because of the FEMA and SAFCA partnership, more than 35,000 property owners who did not have to carry flood insurance stayed in the federal flood insurance pool. What is more, nearly 13,000 policyholders in the American River floodplain switched to Preferred Risk Policies.

In short, FEMA got its money's worth. And this says nothing of the Sacramento premiums that will continue to come into the Federal flood insurance pool each year these policyholders maintain their flood insurance.

Again, most of these policyholders no longer have to buy flood insurance. They do so because it is the safe thing to do. Because SAFCA has alerted them to the ongoing flood risk in their community. And because they saw what happened on the Gulf Coast.

If we can have this type of success in Sacramento, I am confident it can be replicated across the country.

These local outreach efforts will augment and benefit FEMA's existing marketing program by targeting property owners who are most likely to leave the NFIP—those who have been or will be released from the Federal flood insurance requirement.

The lesson learned here is that people whose houses, apartments and businesses are vulnerable to flooding are willing to enter and stay in the National Flood Insurance Program when they are informed of the risk they face and the options available to them.

Let me be clear; I speak from experience. When it comes to flood risk, my district of Sacramento is the most at-risk river city in the Nation.

My highest priority is to provide the city of Sacramento, my neighbors and my constituents with the best flood protection possible. We are making strides in strengthening and reinforcing the levees in Sacramento and making improvements to Folsom Dam—but whenever I talk about these efforts, I remind my constituents, ''If you live behind a levee, you should purchase flood insurance.''

Finally, I am encouraged by the efforts we are making as a Nation to develop a comprehensive flood protection agenda.

FEMA is in the process of implementing their Map Modernization Program that will update our Nation's flood maps.

Additionally, the Army Corps of Engineers is conducting a national levee inventory. When completed, this inventory will provide communities with a greater understanding of their flooding vulnerabilities. It will also provide us with a good indication as a country as to what long-term investments need to be made toward our flood protection infrastructure.

Both the FEMA Remapping Initiative and the levee inventory are important to the long-term safety and economic security of our country. The ''Flood Insurance Community Outreach Grant Program Act of 2006'' would be an excellent resource for communities to augment these initiatives.

This bill is a step in the right direction in providing for comprehensive flood protection for property owners and communities. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS:

Senate passed H.R. 5684, U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S9689–S9735

Measures Introduced: Four bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3910–3913, and S. Res. 572–574. **Pages S9724–25**

Measures Reported:

S. 2010, to amend the Social Security Act to enhance the Social Security of the Nation by ensuring adequate public-private infrastructure and to resolve to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 109–337)

S. 3570, to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2007 through 2011, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S9724**

Measures Passed:

U.S.—Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act: By 62 yeas to32 nays (Vote No. 250), Senate passed H.R. 5684, to implement the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement. **Pages S9694–99**

Uganda Peace Transition: Senate agreed to S. Res. 573, calling on the United States Government and the international community to support the successful transition from conflict to sustainable peace in Uganda. **Pages S9731–32**

New England Wilderness Act: Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was discharged from further consideration of S. 2463, to designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Recreation Area, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S9732–34**

Frist (for Leahy) Amendment No. 5019, to designate certain National Forest System land in the State of Vermont for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and designate a National Recreation Area. **Pages S9732–33**

Frist (for Leahy) Amendment No. 5020, to amend the title. **Pages S9733–34**

Safe Port Act—Conferees: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate insist on its amendment to H.R. 4954, to improve maritime and cargo security through enhanced layered defenses, request a conference with the House thereon, and the Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Senators Collins, Coleman, Bennett, Lieberman, and Levin; from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Senators Stevens, Lott, Hutchison, Inouye, and Lautenberg; from the Committee on Finance: Senators Grassley, Hatch, and Baucus; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Senators Shelby and Sarbanes; and Senator Murray. **Page S9734**

Water Resources Development Act—Conferees: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate insist on its amendment to H.R. 2864, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, agree to the request of the House for a conference, and the Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: Senators Inhofe, Warner, Bond, Voinovich, Chafee, Murkowski, Vitter, Jeffords, Baucus, Lieberman, Boxer, and Carper. **Pages S9734–35**

Secure Fence Act—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 6061, to establish operational control over the international land and maritime borders of the United States; and that following one hour for

debate, Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon. **Page S9735**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 61 yeas 35 nays (Vote No. EX. 251), Alice S. Fisher, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General. **Pages S9699–S9714, S9735**

Executive Communications: **Pages S9722–24**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S9724**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S9725–26**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S9726–30**

Additional Statements: **Pages S9720–22**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S9730–31**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S9731**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S9731**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—251) **Pages S9689–99, S9714**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:45 a.m., and adjourned at 7:31 p.m., until 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, September 20, 2006. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S9735.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATIONS:

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, for reappointment to be general and to be Commander, U.S. European Command, Vice Admiral James G. Stavridis, USN for appointment to be admiral and to be Commander, U.S. Southern Command, Nelson M. Ford, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, and Ronald J. James, of Ohio, to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

COMBATING PORNOGRAPHY

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the problem of child pornography and what financial service companies and their regulators can do to eliminate child pornography from the financial payment system, after receiving testimony from Alberto R. Gonzales, Attorney General, Department of Justice; Ernie Allen, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Alexandria, Virginia; Kim Mowder, Bank of America, Louisville, Kentucky; Mark MacCarthy, Visa U.S.A., Inc., Washington, D.C.; Mike DeNoma, Standard Chartered Bank, Singapore; and Jodi Golinsky, MasterCard Worldwide, Purchase, New York.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Kevin J. Martin, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission, John M. R. Kneuer, of New Jersey, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, and 2 nomination lists in the Coast Guard.

ONLINE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine certain issues relating to online child pornography, identifying, investigating, and prosecuting those who use the Internet to sexually exploit children, after receiving testimony from Alice S. Fisher, Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice; Jim Finch, Assistant Director, Cyber Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Michael J. Brown, Bedford County, Bedford, Virginia; Ernie Allen and John Shehan, both of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Alexandria, Virginia; and Sharon W. Cooper, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Medicine, Fayetteville.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR AMBITIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the policy of the United States towards Iran, focusing on the response to Iran's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability including its nuclear enrichment and re-processing activities, after receiving testimony from R. Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Ray Takeyh, Council on Foreign Relations, and Martin S. Indyk, Brookings Institution, both of Washington, D.C.; and Ashton B. Carter, Harvard University Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

PRISON RADICALIZATION

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to discuss Federal efforts to prevent the recruitment of terrorists and extremists in Federal prisons, after receiving testimony from John M. Vanyur, Assistant Director, Correctional Programs Division, Federal Bureau of Prisons, and Donald N. Van Duyn, Deputy Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, both of the Department of Justice;

Javed Ali, Senior Intelligence Officer, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security; Frank J. Cilluffo, George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute, and Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Counterterrorism Foundation, both of Washington, D.C.; and Gregory B. Saathoff, University of Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville.

COST OF CRIME

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the financial and human impact of criminal activity relating to the cost of crime, focusing on the federal inmate population, and recidivism, after receiving testimony from Harley G. Lappin, Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Jeffrey Sedgwick, Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics, both of the Department of Justice; and Jens Ludwig, Georgetown University Public Policy Institute, and Mary Lou Leary, National Center for Victims of Crime, both of Washington, D.C.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Robert James Jonker, Paul Lewis Maloney, and Janet T. Neff, each to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan, who were introduced by Senators Levin and Stabenow, and Leslie Southwick, of Mississippi, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, who was introduced by Senators Cochran and Lott, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 20 public bills, H.R. 6092–6112; and 6 resolutions, H.J. Res. 95–96; H. Con. Res. 476; and H. Res. 1014–1016 were introduced. **Pages H6732–33**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H6733–35**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 5622, to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, with an amendment (H. Rept. 109–665);

H.R. 4844, to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections, with amendments (H. Rept. 109–666);

H.R. 5811, to implement the Protocol of 1997 to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, with an amendment (H. Rept. 109–667);

H.R. 3849, to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to implement pesticide-related obligations of the United States under the international conventions or protocols known as the PIC Convention, the POPs Convention, and the LRTAP POPs Protocol (H. Rept. 109–668);

H.R. 5483, to increase the disability earning limitation under the Railroad Retirement Act and to index the amount of allowable earnings consistent with increases in the substantial gainful activity dollar amount under the Social Security Act (H. Rept. 109–669); and

H. Res. 1015, providing for consideration of H.R. 4844, to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections (H. Rept. 109–670). **Page H6732**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Gingrey to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H6661**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:41 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H6662**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Anthony Sablan Apuron, Archbishop of Agana, Guam. **Page H6662**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Wool Suit Fabric Labeling Fairness and International Standards Conforming Act: H.R. 4583, amended, to amend the Wool Products Labeling Act of 1939 to revise the requirements for labeling of certain wool and cashmere products; **Pages H6664–66**

Supporting the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015: H. Con. Res. 210, amended, to support the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year

2015, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 403 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 451;

Pages H6666–69, H6704–05

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week: H. Res. 982, to support the goals and ideals of National Peripheral Arterial Disease Awareness Week;

Pages H6669–70

Supporting the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness: H. Res. 526, amended, to support the goals and ideals of observing the Year of Polio Awareness; **Pages H6670–72**

Honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse: H. Con. Res. 386, amended, to honor Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse; **Pages H6673–74**

Recognizing and honoring the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II: H. Res. 622, amended, to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 402 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 452;

Pages H6674–78, H6705

Condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is: H. Con. Res. 415, to condemn the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 393 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 453; **Pages H6678–81, H6705–06**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam needs to do more to resolve claims for confiscated real and personal property: H. Res. 415, amended, to express the sense of the House of Representatives that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam needs to do more to resolve claims for confiscated real and personal property; **Pages H6685–87**

Requesting the President to issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing: H. Con. Res. 317, amended, to request the President to issue a proclamation annually calling upon the people of the United States to observe Global Family Day, One Day of Peace and Sharing; **Pages H6687–90**

Recognizing and supporting the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 in increasing adoption and the efforts the Act has spurred including National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month, and encouraging adoption throughout the year: H. Res. 959, to recognize and support the success of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 in increasing adoption and the efforts the Act has spurred including National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month, and encouraging adoption throughout the year; **Pages H6702–04**

Student and Teacher Safety Act of 2006: H.R. 5295, amended, to protect students and teachers;

Pages H6695–H6700

Recognizing and honoring America's Seniors: H. Res. 874, amended, to recognize and honor America's Seniors; and **Pages H6700–02**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: ''Recognizing and honoring older American's.''. **Page H6702**

Recognizing and supporting the efforts of the State of New York develop the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York: H. Con. Res. 419, amended, to recognize and support the efforts of the State of New York develop the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York. **Pages H6692–95**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House completed debate on the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further consideration of the measures is expected to resume at a later date:

Recognizing the centennial anniversary on August 5, 2006, of the Iranian constitution of 1906: H. Res. 942, to recognize the centennial anniversary on August 5, 2006, of the Iranian constitution of 1906; and **Pages H6681–85**

Condemning human rights abuses by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressing solidarity with the Iranian people: H. Res. 976, to condemn human rights abuses by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressing solidarity with the Iranian people.

Pages H6690–92

Senate Messages: Message received from the Senate today and message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on pages H6662, H6718.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings today and appear on pages H6704–05, H6705, H6705–06. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12:30 p.m. and adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Committee Meetings

NIH REFORM

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Held a hearing entitled "Improving NIH Management and Operation: A Legislative Hearing on the NIH Reform Act of 2006." Testimony was heard from Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D., Director, NIH, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

SARBANES-OXLEY ACT REVIEW

Committee on Financial Services:, Held a hearing entitled "Sarbanes-Oxley at Four: Protecting Investors and Strengthening the Markets." Testimony was heard from Christopher Cox, Chairman, SEC; and a public witness.

COMBATING TERRORISM/LESSONS LEARNED FROM LONDON

Committee on Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations held a hearing entitled "Combating Terrorism: Lessons Learned From London." Testimony was heard from John Rollins, Specialist in Terrorism and International Crime, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress; Baroness Falkner of Margravine, member, House of Lords, United Kingdom; and public witnesses.

NONADMITTED INSURANCE AND REINSURANCE REFORM ACT

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law held a hearing on H.R. 5637, Nonadmitted and Reinsurance Reform Act of 2006. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL ELECTION INTEGRITY ACT

Committee on Rules: Granted, by voice vote, a closed rule providing one hour of debate in the House on H.R. 4844, to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require any individual who desires to register or re-register to vote in an election for Federal office to provide the appropriate State election official with proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States to prevent fraud in Federal elections, and for other purposes, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute as reported by the Committee on House Administration shall be considered as adopted. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Ehlers and Representative Millender-McDonald.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation, with the Subcommittee on Economic Policy, to hold joint hearings to examine issues relating to non-traditional mortgages and their implications for consumers, financial institutions, and the economy, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Trade, Tourism, and Economic Development, to hold hearings to examine the future of ICANN relating to Internet governance, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Mary E. Peters, of Arizona, to be Secretary of Transportation, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine approaches embodied in the Asia Pacific Partnership, 2:30 p.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine objectives, deficiencies, and options for reform relating to business tax system, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Donald Y. Yamamoto, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: business meeting to consider S. 2322, to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly, S. 1531, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to expand and intensify programs with respect to research and related activities concerning elder falls, S. 3771, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide additional authorizations of appropriations for the health centers program under section 330 of such Act, S. 1325, to establish grants to provide health services for improved nutrition, increased physical activity, obesity and eating disorder prevention, H.R. 5074, to amend the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 to provide for continued payment of railroad retirement annuities by the Department of the Treasury, and the nominations of Randolph James Clerihue, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, Jane M. Doggett, of Montana, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities, Andrew von Eschenbach, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, Stephen Goldsmith, of Indiana, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, Roger L. Hunt, of Nevada, John E. Kidde, of California, and John Peyton, of Florida, each to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation, Lauren M. Maddox, of

Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Communications and Outreach, Department of Education, Eliza McFadden, of Florida, to be a Member of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board, Sandra Pickett, of Texas, to be a Member of the National Museum and Library Services Board, Arthur K. Reilly, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, Peter W. Tredick, of California, to be a Member of the National Mediation Board, nominations in the Public Health Service Corps, and other pending nominations, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine assessing Spiral 1.1 of the National Security Personnel System, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: to hold an oversight hearing to examine Tribal Self Governance, 9:30 a.m., SR–485.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine preserving effective Federal law enforcement relating to reporters' privilege legislation, 9:30 a.m., SD–226.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the proposal to restructure the Ninth Circuit, 2 p.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the legislative presentation of the American Legion, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing regarding intelligence matters, 3:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, hearing to review Federal Farm Policy, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, to consider the following: the National Institutes of Health Reform Act of 2006; H.R. 5533, Biodefense and Pandemic Vaccine and Drug Development Act of 2006; H.R. 3248, Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2005; H.R. 971, To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut; S. 176, To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Alaska; S. 244, To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Wyoming; H.R. 4377, To extend the time required for construction of a hydroelectric project; H.R. 4417, To provide for the reinstatement of a license for a certain Federal Energy Regulatory project; a resolution authorizing the issuance of subpoenas in connection with the Committee's investigation into data brokering, including its investigation into the Hewlett-Packard situation, and related matters; a resolution authorizing the issuance of subpoenas in connection with the Committee's investigation into the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet, and related matters; and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing entitled ''Improving Transparency in State Regulation of Insurer Investments,'' 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on Energy and Resources, hearing entitled ''The Next Generation Nuclear Plant and Hydrogen Production: A Critical Status Report,'' 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Federal Workforce and Agency Organization, hearing entitled ''Executive and Judicial Compensation in the Federal Government (Quadrennial Commission),'' 2 p.m., 2203 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Federalism and the Census, hearing entitled ''Historic Preservation and Community Development: Why Cities and Towns Should Look to the Past as the Key to Their Future,'' 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment, hearing entitled ''The Homeland Security Implications of Radicalization,'' 1 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on International Relations, hearing on Afghanistan: Five Years after 9/11, Part I, 10:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, hearing on the Deteriorating Peace in Sudan, 2:30 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats, to mark up H. Res. 989, Commending the United Kingdom for its efforts in the War on Terror; followed by a hearing on Serbia: Current Issues and Future Direction, 1 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, to mark up the following bills H.R. 6054, Military Commissions Act of 2006: H.R. 5825, Electronic Surveillance Modernization Act; H.R. 6052, Copyright Modernization Act of 2006; and H.R. 4239, Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Resources, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing on H.R. 6080, to establish the Mineral Commodity Information Agency within the Department of the Interior, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Rules, to consider the following: H.R. 6094, Community Protection Act; H.R. 6095, Immigration Law Enforcement Act; and H.R. 4830, Border Tunnel Prevention Act, 3:30 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing on Department of Energy's Plan for Climate Change Technology Programs, 2 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Research, hearing on International Polar Year: The Scientific Agenda and Federal Role, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to mark up the following: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Survey Resolutions; GSA Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions for Fiscal Year 2007; H.R. 1105, Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2005; H.R. 4981, amended, Dam Safety Act of 2006; H.R. 5026, To designate the Investigations Building of the Food and Drug Administration located at 466 Fernandez Juncos Avenue in San Juan, Puerto, as the ''Andres Toro Building;'' H.R. 1556, To designate a parcel of land located on the site of the Thomas F. Eagleton United States Courthouse in St. Louis, Missouri, as the ''Clyde S. Cahill Memorial Park;'' H.R. 5606, To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 221 and 211 West Ferguson Street in Tyler, Texas as the ''William M. Steger Federal Building and United States Courthouse;''

H.R. 2322, To designate the Federal building located at 320 North Main Street in McAllen, Texas, as the ''Kika de la Garza Federal Building;'' H. R. 5546, amended, To designate the U.S. courthouse to be constructed in Greenville, South Carolina, as the ''Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., Federal Courthouse;'' and H.R. 6051, amended, To designate the Federal building located at 2 South Main Street in Akron, Ohio, as the ''John F. Seiberling Federal Building,'' 11 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled ''Oversight of Federal Aviation Administration Safety Programs,'' 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, oversight hearing to review the previous fiscal year and look ahead to the upcoming year, 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, to mark up H.R. 6825, Electronic Surveillance Modernization Act, 2 p.m., H–405 Capitol.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, September 20

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 30 minutes), Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 6061, Secure Fence Act, with a vote on the motion to invoke cloture to occur thereon at approximately 11 a.m.

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

10 a.m., Wednesday, September 20

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of suspensions as follows: (1) S. 1025—Wichita Project Equus Beds Division Authorization Act of 2005; (2) S. 2430—Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 2006; (3) H.R. 2334—City of Oxnard Water Recycling and Desalination Act of 2005; (4) H.R. 5664—Jacob Fletcher Post Office Building Designation Act; (5) H.R. 4768—Robert Linn Memorial Post Office Building Designation Act; (6) H.R. 4586—Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission Act of 2005; (7) S. 2832—Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2006; (8) H.R. 4653—To repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California; (9) H.R. 3858—Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006; and (10) H.R. 5450—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Act. Consideration of H.R. 4844—Federal Election Integrity Act of 2006 (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Berman, Howard L., Calif., E1757
Berry, Marion, Ark., E1765
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